

## THE TRAGEDY OF CARRISBROOK CASTLE.

BY HENRIETTA E. PAGE.

A pretty cottage, embowered in vines, roses, and honeysuckle, with low, open windows leading into a *bijou* of a garden decorated with two tiny fountains in full play, and cozy arbors,—one mass of blooming beauty. Upon the smooth, graveled walk, with arms entwined, stand a couple radiant in youth and loveliness: he in the full uniform of a first lieutenant in the English army; she with gauzy white raiment and blue ribbons, her golden curls tied back from her fair brow with a knot of the same.

They are man and wife, or, I might say, bride and groom; for but one short month has passed since the man of God joined them in the holy bonds of wedlock, since which time earth has seemed a veritable Eden to the happy pair.

He is the second son of an English nobleman, rich by a bequest from his mother,—who had died two years previous to his marriage,—and so not dependent upon his lieutenant's pay. She was the daughter of the Dean of Southampton, very beautiful, and much sought after, and but twenty at the commencement of this "over true tale."

Newport was at that time particularly cel-

ebrated for two reasons: one was a mass of magnificent Gothic ruins called Carrisbrook Castle, noted as being the last place of incarceration of the unfortunate Charles the First, prior to his execution; and the other reason for its notoriety was that it was the site of Newport Barracks, which were situated about a mile from the ruins, and formed the headquarters of a set of as gay young bloods as ever entered her Majesty's service.

The young wife was fastening an exquisite bouquet in her husband's coat, and, as she raised her beautiful lips for a parting kiss, she whispered,—

"My darling, I am so happy; almost too happy, I am afraid."

"Oh, no, Lulie! not too happy, love: we cannot be that. I am glad your sister Rose has come to stay with you a while. You will not miss me so much now, will you, dear?"

"Yes, George, just as much; no one can fill your place, or make up to me for your absence," she said, as she laid her pretty head upon his bosom, and looked up into his eyes.

"Ever billing and cooing," cried a gay voice, as a rosy face, surrounded with jetty curls, was pushed through the clustering roses. "I declare, I never saw such turtle-doves."

The young wife blushed, and her husband laughed, as, shaking his finger at the beautiful girl, he answered, —

"It will be your turn some time, rattle-brain; and then won't I pay you in your own coin! I must go now, little wife," dwelling fondly on the word; "but I will be waiting for you at four."

She smiled.

"It will seem an age till then. I will have the grays and myself there precisely at four; and see that you do not keep me waiting a single minute, for I don't like to have the men stare at me," pouting coquettishly, and smiling while she pouted.

"If you do not like to come to the barracks, I will meet you somewhere else, darling," earnestly.

"Oh, no," she laughingly replied. "I think I can stand it for once, if I do not have to wait too long. I wish the hateful dinner was over. George, darling, do not drink much wine, will you, dear? It is such a wild set: I wish you did not belong to it."

"I will sell out, if you say so," tenderly pressing her hand.

"Oh, I wish you would! Then you might turn gentleman farmer, and we would have a little Arcadia of our own."

"Your ladyship shall be obeyed. This shall be the last time I go to the barracks. Kiss me once more, sweet. Now adieu."

And, doffing his cap, he bowed himself, laughing, from the presence of the two smiling, beautiful women.

The wife watched him until he was hidden from her sight by the trees, then as she was turning toward her sister the girl came quietly to her side, and, passing her arm around her, said, in a serious voice, —

"Do not watch him out of sight, Lullie; it is a bad sign."

The blue-eyed wife turned quickly.

"What! you turned superstitious, Rose? Surely, the skies will fall."

She laughed gayly, mockingly.

"Do not mock me, dear. I feel dreadfully dumpy, and have all day. I don't know what can be the matter; but I feel as though something dreadful was going to happen."

Lullie turned pale.

"You are bilious, Rose: you look dreadfully yellow about the mouth. That is your London dissipation. Aunt let you eat too rich food. We will alter all that, — make you go to bed before midnight, and take long walks in the morning. Why, Rose, you do not know what you lose by staying in bed so late. It is perfectly lovely here at sunrise, and the place abounds in delightful walks and drives. When you get acquainted, you will not lack for either, — or for escorts," glancing slyly at her beautiful sister. "Did not George look handsome, Rose? I think he is the handsomest man in the barracks; and, in my way of thinking, the best."

"Yes, Lullie, he is perfect. If I could see another just as nice, just as handsome, and just as good, I should not object to" — pausing, as if in doubt.

"Getting married too?" laughed her happy sister.

"Going to walk with him," demurely answered Rose.

"Oh, you provoking creature! I have a great mind to slap you," sidling up to her with her pink palm spread.

"Oh, please don't: I 'll never do so again," she laughingly pleaded. "Come, let us make bouquets and garlands to decorate the table and pictures. It will please George, I know. He loves everything beautiful, else he had not chosen you," glancing admiringly at Lullie.

"Flatterer!" cried the radiant girl-wife.

"Yes, we will have a little jubilee in honor of his leaving the service. O Rose! I shall be so happy. That is the only drawback to my perfect happiness, — those nasty barracks, and the disagreeable men in them."

"They are not all disagreeable, are they, Lullie?"

"Oh, no," she answered; and she broke off a dewy, fragrant rose, and peered into its damask heart; "not all of them, but one in particular, — Lieutenant Monterey. He will be a lord when his father dies; and he puts on a great many airs in consequence, and manages to make himself very disagreeable, — at least I think so."

"I am rather sorry for that, for I had almost decided to set my cap for him. It would sound rather nice, 'Lady Monterey,' 'Lady Rose Monterey,' now would it not, Lullie?"

"Yes, if it were any other man who owned the title; but I should not love to see

you the wife of Arthur Monterry, as I know him. There, I think we have enough flowers. Let us use what we have before we pluck any more."

And the two beauties, gathering their floral treasures in their arms, entered the house by the low windows, and the lace curtains fluttered in the breeze caused by the wafting of their gauzy garments.

We will now seek a far different scene.

The mess-table in Newport Barracks was a sight to behold. — a glittering mass of snowy damask, cut glass of different colors, and silver and flowers; and it almost groaned beneath its load of rich viands, — while around it sat a company of roystering, happy men, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot," for the time, at least.

Gayest and merriest of all these was Arthur Monterry. He was a wild, handsome fellow of twenty-five, of very generous disposition, but very loose morals. He was well liked by a certain set of the men, and not so much admired by others. His weakest point was women; his next weakest, wine: and when he had imbibed a certain amount of the latter he was always very profuse in his admiration for, and his conceited boasts of triumph over, the former. It was so now. As the dinner progressed, the hilarity ran high, and toasts and boasts and songs and jokes made the long room ring again.

George was not in his element, it was plain. His heart was with his pure young wife, and he longed to be with her himself. He was uncommonly quiet, and ate little, drinking less, which his companions noticed, and bantered him upon its cause, calling him Benedict the Second, and laughing uproariously when, in spite of himself, he blushed; but it was because he did not like his young wife's name bandied around in such a place.

Monterry watched him with a frown, for his happiness was very distasteful to the proud man, — more especially so, as he had been a suitor for the same fair lady's hand; but a very unsuccessful one, as we perceive by her marrying George Sunderland, whom she loved, and who loved her with a passion stronger than death itself.

As I said, his perfect content and intense happiness galled the handsome libertine; and now, inflamed with wine as he was, his jealousy burned like a slumbering volcano,

and every word or smile of his successful rival but added fuel to the flames which momentarily threatened to burst forth with devouring and destructive force.

A great many boasts had been vaunted and a great many fair names befouled, when at last Monterry, with a sidelong, treacherous look at young Sunderland, asked, in a loud voice, —

"Who has seen the beautiful queen of flowers and hearts, who has arrived lately from London to be transplanted into the soil of the Isle of Wight? I mean the beautiful and gushing Rose Montfort."

George paled and trembled, but kept his temper. The friends of each looked pale and flustered, for they feared a quarrel.

"What! have none of you seen the clear, limbed Hebe?" in pretended wonder.

"Hush, Monterry! you don't know what you are talking about. Do you remember she is George Sunderland's wife's sister?"

"I don't care if she is his wife's grand mother," he cried, with drunken levity. "say she is a buster, gentlemen, — a regular stunner; and, what is still more delightful — this is, of course, a secret between ourselves, gentlemen, — just a little fast."

George sprang to his feet, as lurid as a corpse.

"You are a liar!" he whispered, hoarsely with passion.

Monterry went on as if he had not heard him.

"And I wager my brown filly that a month from today I will wear her favors openly. I think I can win her easily, — women of her temperament are generally pretty easy" —

Here George's glass struck him in the face, the red wine trickling down his ruffled shirt-front, and staining his delicate, jeweled hands like crimson gore. As the maddened man repeated, this time in clarion tones, —

"You are a liar, Monterry. Rose Montfort is as pure a woman as ever drew breath; and you are an infernal coward to say otherwise. A coward: do you hear, snake? I proclaim you a coward."

Monterry quietly wiped the wine from his face, and smiled a sardonic smile, as he answered, —

"Remember, gentlemen, — a month from today: mark it in your betting-books."

George rushed toward the tantalizing devil, and would have choked him on the spot, but his friends held him back, panting

and struggling, with drops of sweat upon his handsome, manly brow.

"I shall have to change my shirt," the libertine Monterry coolly said, glancing insultingly at the excited man a few steps from him.

"Shame! shame on you, Monterry, for a paltry coward!" cried one of his friends; and "Shame! Shame!" echoed the whole room.

George drew a long breath, and, releasing himself from the friendly hands which held him, took from his pocket his gauntlet, and flung it at Monterry's feet.

"Arthur Monterry, you must answer with your life for that foul charge and those boasting words."

Monterry threw his own at George's feet, and coolly answered, —

"Delighted. At what time and place? and what weapons?"

"Now. Carrisbrook Castle. Pistols."

"Thanks. I, as the challenged party, had the choice of weapons; but you see I am generous: I waive my rights. Harrison, I wish you to attend me as second. Gentlemen, if you will excuse me a few seconds, I would be glad: I wish to change my shirt."

And, smiling still, he left the room. Once outside, he shook his fist at the door, and a look of deadly hate overspread his face, as he hissed, —

"At last! at last!"

George's friends surrounded him with kind words of encouragement, and words of praise for his gallant defence of a pure woman's name; and many were the fierce denunciations of the cowardly attack of Monterry. It was a quarter past three when they started for Carrisbrook Castle, with one exception a sad-hearted little band.

Lulie Sunderland rode slowly along in a happy, dreamy mood. She was early, the afternoon was delightful, and the air laden with sweet, enervating scents; so she lay back in the low carriage, and let the reins hang loosely in her listless fingers. Sweet smiles played about her dimpled mouth ever and anon, and a radiant light gleamed in her heaven-blue eyes. At last her thoughts found words.

"How good God has been to me, — how very good: first, in giving such a darling father and mother, and pleasant home; and now filling my cup to overflowing with joy

and gladness in George's dear love. Only five minutes now, and I shall see his blessed face and loving smile, and hear his dear, cheerful voice. Oh, it seems an age since I saw him last, and it is barely four hours! I don't know what the matter is with me: it seems as though I never had wanted to see him so badly as I do now. Oh! here are the gates," taking out her watch. "It wants just one minute; and my darling is always punctual. Whoa, Pinky! whoa, Daisy! We will wait for our lord and master here, where he will see us the minute he steps out of the door."

"Oh!" she cried, glancing down the road, "what is the matter? Some one has got hurt. Poor fellow! who can it be? There is Major Harrison, White, Stuart, and Dr. Martin, and that detestable Monterry! I wonder who is hurt? I declare, I feel quite sick. I thought they were going to be at the celebration dinner. Why, what ails the men?"

For they had just lifted their eyes, and beheld the fair bride of a month waiting at the gate for her dilatory husband, and they simultaneously came to a dead halt twenty yards from the pretty, snowy carriage and its lonely occupant, and every face paled, and every lip grew ashen, and trembled, and great tears roiled over bronzed cheeks unchecked. Monterry skulked in the rear like a whipped dog.

Lulie glanced from one to another, and a great pang shot from brain to heart: then she stepped lightly to the ground, and flew to the side of the bier, and stretched out her hand to uncover the hidden face. Major Harrison strove to prevent her; but with an air of dignity she resented his interference, and drew down the cloak in which the wounded man was wrapped, disclosing the deathly features of her husband.

She did not scream or moan, but looked in all their faces in turn to discover his murderer. At last she came to Monterry, who lingered near in spite of himself. She stood in front of him, and gazed into his awe-struck eyes with orbs that seemed to emit scathing gleams of lightning. He cowered and trembled before the woman he had widowed. At this moment the clock struck four.

"Arthur Monterry, you have murdered George Sunderland; murdered him, I say. You have always hated him, and now this is your revenge. Now listen: I curse you,

Arthur Monterry, — curse you! I pray that you may never know another really happy moment; that every joy may turn to sorrow, every pleasure be turned to pain; and that your death, when God pleases to call you, may be one of violence and horror. You have ruined my life, — have made a widow of me, who am only one month a wife!" Then turning to the body of her husband she murmured, "A widow! a widow!" as though she could not realize the fact; then, with a piercing scream of, "O George! my husband!" fell prone on his lifeless body, for the time as lifeless as he.

Monterry would have fallen had not one of his comrades gone to his assistance. He was now sober, and fully realized the enormity of his crime; and, strange to say, now death had claimed his rival, he could not imagine what cause he could ever have had for enmity, and would freely have given his life could he by so doing have restored that of Lulie's husband, and his face was as ghastly as that of the dead.

Tender hands bore the young wife to her desolated home, and prepared her husband for his last long rest; but it was many hours ere Lulie came back to consciousness of her trouble, and when she did all signs of violence had disappeared, and George lay as in a quiet sleep in the pretty flower-decked parlor, where she and Rose had worked so happily only that morning. Rose stood over the couch whereon he lay with eyes burning with unshed tears, and tense lines drawn through the fair young face, and hands clasped fierce and hard, murmuring through ashy lips, —

"He died for me, he died for me! O my God! he died for me! What did I come for? Poor Lulie! O George, my brother, I wish I had never seen your dear face!"

We will pass over the funeral, and all its sad rites, and leave two years behind us. Lulie and Rose still occupy the little bird's-nest of a cottage, and their aunt has left London and its gay doings to keep them company.

It is a lovely day in June, and Lulie is seated in a low rocker in one of the rose-embowered arbors, gazing with glowing, worshiping eyes upon a sleeping boy over a year of age, her child; the image of her lost husband, and his namesake. Great tears drop from her eyes and shine upon the baby's sunny hair as she whispers, —

"My own, my own! my George!"

Rose stands in the doorway, and Lulie looks up.

"Is he not the image of his father, Rose? Ah! how proud George would have been of him, — our boy! O Rose! I began to doubt God's goodness until he sent this precious link which binds me yet closer to heaven and my husband. But what makes you so pale, dear?" anxiously.

"Lulie, I have just refused Arthur Monterry."

"Did he dare propose? But, then, why not? If ever there was a repentant man, he is one," in a sad, forgiving voice.

"He said your curse had proven a true one, for he has never known a happy hour since; and though he asked me to be his wife he did not expect a propitious answer. I — I really pitied him, Lulie; but I swore over George's bier to have revenge, and — and I have," sobs choking her utterance.

"Sorry revenge, poor girl! Rose, I thank you for your fealty; but do not carry your revenge too far. I try hard to forgive Monterry the ruin of my hopes, and if I could recall my words I would; for his poor, patient face haunts me. I have never seen him smile since that dreadful day; and, Rose, it is not too late, — recall him. I will try to treat him as a brother. I know your heart better than you do yourself. You have been leading him on for revenge; but your revenge will recoil upon your own heart."

Rose shook her head defiantly, and answered, —

"I think you are mistaken, Lulie. Why, what ails auntie? See her cap-strings fly! Why, how pale she is! Auntie! auntie! what is the matter?" as the old lady stopped, pale and breathless.

"O Lulie! O Rose! my poor, poor girl!"

"What is it, auntie?" cried Rose, turning red and white by turns. "Father — mother" — anxiously.

"Neither, neither. Arthur Monterry" —

"What of him?" together cried Lulie and Rose.

"Dead! shot himself fifteen minutes since!"

"George, you are avenged! I have killed him, and I loved him!" cried Rose, as she sank at her sister's feet.

Later, as they sat together, Rose clasped Lulie in a warm embrace, and, kissing her fondly, whispered through her tears, —

"We will live for each other, dear sister, and for George's boy. I am sorry Arthur should have taken his life into his own hands; but perhaps it is as well that he is at rest. I never could have been wholly happy with him, for I should have always fancied I saw blood upon his hands, even in our happiest moments."

Lutie gave a sigh of relief as she returned her sister's fond caresses.

"I am glad, my darling, that you are so resigned. I feared it might spoil your life for the whole future. We must try and live our lives alone: no, not alone, for God

is above us, and still spares to us our parents and this darling; and we will strive to be happy, and, in planning our George's future, strive to forget the horrors of the past, and remember only its pleasures. It is not granted us to be too happy on earth,—else we might, in our selfish pleasure, forget there was a hereafter. We will live for others, dear sister. Let us see how bright we can make other and even sadder lives than our own; and in time we shall, not forget, but cease to mourn, and look forward to a bright, a glorious reunion with those who are not lost, but only gone before."

## THE TRAGEDY OF THE WILLOWS.

BY F. H. ANGIER.

I hardly know how it has come about that I am the one to tell this story; for, after all, it is not my story, but the story of Heliassé, which I have to tell.

I think I was twenty when I went to live in the family of Cyril Marbury at The Willows. He was an old man even then, and has now for many long years been gathered to his ancestors; but, at the time of which I speak, he was still hale and hearty, and lived alone at The Willows, the homestead of his family, with his daughter Heliassé.

It would be useless for me to attempt to describe the beauty of Heliassé, though her comeliness at that time had not attained the rare perfection which the ripeness of maturer womanhood afterward gave to it. When I was first brought into her presence, and presented to her as her future maid, I could only open my eyes, and wonder. I had never before that time seen a face to compare with hers; nor have I ever, with one exception, done so since. It seems hardly possible to me now to think of Heliassé but as I saw her then, — a slight, girlish figure, with a wealth of chestnut tresses rolling down in a luxuriant mass upon her straight, lithe shoulders, and with those hazel eyes bent so kindly upon me. I knew, even then, that, no matter what trouble might come upon her, hers was a beauty which would last until old age had fairly reached her. The bright intelligence of her features would never lose their subtle play of expression: the brilliancy of those eyes would never leave them until the light faded out from them in the shadows of death.

And so, at the age of twenty, I, an orphan girl, came to live at The Willows, first as maid to Heliassé, and afterward as house-keeper to Cyril Marbury.

But I must not anticipate my story.

The Willows had been the homestead of the Marbury family for many generations. The mansion itself was nearly two hundred years old; and though it had undoubtedly seen its best days, it was still a royal residence, in which even a king need not have been ashamed to reside. Its grim stone

walls had been built with castellated turrets and towers, and over all the antique windows were rows of lions' heads carved in the stone; doubtless terrible enough when first chiseled, but then, in consequence of their broken noses and battered features, hardly so dreadful as in their earlier days.

The place took its name from a vast grove of ancient willows at the southern end of the farm. Mr. Marbury called it a "copse," but it was more like a morass. Beneath the trees the ground was a huge swamp of boggy ooze, with little bunches of rushes sprouting here and there, and tussocks of scythe-grass which offered but precarious footing to the adventurer. This marsh drained toward the centre into a black and frightful pool, around which the gnarled and knotted willows grew in closely interlocked embrace, dipping their drooping branches into the murky water, and forming a shade so dense that twilight reigned there even at midday.

It was a horrible place; but Heliassé had found a strange attraction in this bleak, slimy pool, and loved to stroll thither on the hot afternoons, to throw herself upon the green moss beneath the willows, and gaze into the water for hours. The spot seemed to exercise a weird fascination upon her; and so fond was she of the dreadful place, that her father, who could deny her nothing, had yielded to her urgent request, and constructed a causeway across the marsh, terminating in a little arbor, with seats, on the brink of the pond. This structure was quite untenable, except at midsummer; for at all other times the swamp was overflowed, and the thousand twisted trunks of the willows rose like serpents from a foul expanse of water which covered all the morass except the causeway itself.

I had very little time to become acquainted with my new mistress then; for Heliassé was about to be married, and it was not long before the bridegroom came, and took her away across the sea to his own home in France. She was only fifteen, and much too young, I thought.

I was to have gone with her, they said; but an unfortunate illness prevented, and the wedding-day found me confined to my bed, so that I had not even the pleasure of dressing the bride. When the ceremony was all over, and the carriages waiting, Heliassé came to me in her traveling-dress to kiss me good-by, as I lay in my room, too ill to sit up; for, even in her own happiness that day, she did not forget to come in to say a few kind, encouraging words to me. How I blessed her for it when she was gone! And I long retained in my heart her image as she bent over me like a beautiful spirit, too holy and unreal for such as I to even touch. I can see her now as she appeared to me then, and the memory seems like a sweet dream.

So, when I got well, and it was decided that I was not to follow my young mistress to France, I was installed as dairy-maid under the supervision of Mrs. Berney, the housekeeper.

In the fullness of time, Mrs. Berney, unable longer to resist the combined attacks of her old arch enemies, rheumatism and pleurisy, which had long threatened to bring her sphere of usefulness to a close, retired from the world, and left The Willows without a head. On the morning after the funeral, — five years after Heliassé's departure, — Mr. Marbury came to me, and said in his quiet way, —

"Well, little girl, you must be housekeeper now."

And I could only blush, and stammer, in my happiness, —

"If you please, sir, I don't think I am quite capable."

"You know more than you think you do," he said. "Here are the keys. Now let us see how economically you can use them."

And thus it was that I became housekeeper at The Willows. Thanks to Mrs. Berney's careful instruction, I got along much better than I expected. There was little to do; for Mr. Marbury lived quite a retired life, and visitors seldom came to The Willows.

The years came and went in a monotonous round, the letters from Heliassé being almost the only events in our lives that seemed worthy of notice. These letters came very regularly during all of Heliassé's residence abroad. She was very happy, she said, and had every reason to be grateful for

her lot. In the second year of her marriage, a child was born, — a little, brown-eyed thing, that soon gave evidence, so its father said, — as Heliassé wrote, with an engaging mixture of wifely and motherly pride, — of being even more lovely than her mother. Alas! I was to know, in after-years, something of the loveliness of that child; and Heliassé was to learn, in the very depth of her own future misery, how fatal to herself was the beauty of the being whom she had brought into the world.

And so for fifteen years we plodded on through our daily life at The Willows. People had begun then to speak of "old Cyril Marbury;" for the loss of his daughter told severely upon him, and his head was whitening rapidly.

At last, one day there came a letter, in the handwriting of Heliassé, which bore a black seal. Its contents told, in a few words, the story which the seal had already foreshadowed to us. Poor Heliassé was a widow.

"Now," said Mr. Marbury, "my child will come back to me. God is good, and there is no loss without some small gain."

Heliassé did come back; but she left her child in France. The little girl was then just thirteen years of age, and blossoming into a most lovely womanhood. But Heliassé had deemed it best, she said, to leave her to finish her education in France; and she had been more reconciled to the separation since she had left her child in careful hands, with the relatives of her husband. Whether it would have been better had she taken a different course, God only knows. We are obliged to draw conclusions by the light of after-events. But it seems to me now that Heliassé could not have done worse than to have left her little girl behind her.

It seemed to me, when Heliassé came back, that the world could not contain another being as beautiful. She had ripened into the absolute perfection of womanly loveliness. Her widow's weeds became her too, and the sombre hue of her daily costume only served to reveal more fully the whiteness and purity of her marvelous complexion. For weeks after her return, I could do little but admire her. She readily fell into her old ways after a while; and I could see little difference between the woman of thirty and the Heliassé of fifteen, little change in the present lady of The



Willows from my young mistress of the years long gone. She had not, in all her residence abroad, forgotten her old haunt in the willow swamp, and it was not long after her return when she drifted into her old habit of strolling thither as regularly as when I first became acquainted with the spot.

One day we were there together, for I had come down from the house at the request of Heliassé, though the place was always repulsive and horrible to me. We had taken a volume of Shelley with us,—for Heliassé was fond of hearing me read,—and there, seated in the little arbor, which had recently been repaired and painted, we sat together during the whole of the afternoon. As the sun grew low, I laid down the book, and said to Heliassé,—

“Come, let us go back now. This is no place for us when the dew begins to fall.”

She arose at once, and put her arm through mine.

“You always know what is best, Martha,” she said. “You are the matron, and I the child.”

I laughed, and we strolled back together toward the house. As now, so it was in all our intercourse together. She always treated me as an equal, and seemed to try to place me in the nook in her heart which her mother might have filled had she lived.

We had scarcely advanced a hundred yards, when Heliassé, who had gone a little in advance on account of the narrowness of the path, drew suddenly back, and screamed. Echoing her shriek, I hastened to her side, and looked in the direction in which her finger pointed. There, coiled up upon the causeway, was a huge *crotalus*, its head raised menacingly in the air, and its horrible eyes flashing fire. Heliassé screamed again, and so did I; for we were both too terrified to either advance or retreat. Our shrieks, which might have been heard all the way to the house, were at least productive of something. They produced a young man, who, with a light stick in his hand, came running along the causeway toward us.

“Go back! Go back!” cried Heliassé, motioning him away with both her hands.

He stopped short, and seemed puzzled. Then Heliassé pointed to the cause of our terror; and no sooner had the stranger—in whom I recognized Robert Sidney, the young owner of the adjoining estate—

caught sight of the monster than he darted at it, and with his stick made short work of the creature in a trice.

“An ugly fellow,” he said, poisoning the flaccid body on the end of his cane for a moment before flinging it away from him. “But the path is safe now, ladies. I think you will find no more of them.”

“I should hope not,” replied Heliassé. And then she whispered to me, “Do you know him? Why don’t you introduce him to me?”

Thus brought to a recollection of my duty, I performed the introduction clumsily enough. In an instant I saw that both he and Heliassé were pleased with each other. He was a handsome fellow, not more than twenty-seven, and possessed a good address, with that careless air of easy assertion which has such a subtle charm for women.

“I have been trespassing,” he said pleasantly, “and you have caught me in the act. I came over into the swamp to cut this willow stick; and I found use for it somewhat sooner than I intended.”

“A very good use, too,” said Heliassé. “You came to the rescue like one of the knights of old, just as the maidens were about to be devoured by the dragon.”

So, chatting merrily,—though most of the chatting was done by Heliassé and Mr. Sidney,—we sauntered back to the house. I was somewhat surprised to see that Heliassé was unusually impressed by her new acquaintance, though it was nothing strange that he manifested such evident admiration for her. More than once during that short walk I noticed his eyes fixed upon her beautiful face with a look so rapt that I really half feared he was on the point of making some foolish speech which might turn all Heliassé’s favor into positive dislike in an instant; for Heliassé was singularly whimsical, and I knew her character better than Robert Sidney. No such catastrophe occurred, however, and we reached the house before twilight had quite gathered in.

“You will call and see us, Mr. Sidney, I hope,” said Heliassé.

“I shall be only too happy,” he replied. “I have nothing to do, and will come every day, if you will let me.”

“Well,” said Heliassé, giving him her hand, warmly, “do. You will be always welcome.”

“I will,” he said, and went away.

And he was almost as good as his word;

for, though he did not come every day, he still came very frequently, and in the course of a few months we learned to consider him as almost one of the family. It was easy to see that Heliassé favored these visits; that she was glad when he came, and sorry when he went away; that she had found in Robert Sidney an attraction which she was not wont to find in all men. I think Mr. Marbury was pleased with this evidence that Heliassé had not buried all her interest in the world in the grave of her former husband.

As for me, I soon discovered that when these two were together my absence was evidently more desirable than my company. I could hardly believe that Heliassé would so quickly begin to think of another husband; and I tried to account for her manifest interest in Sidney by the fact that her life at The Willows was lonely, at best, and that Sidney was new to her. His father had purchased the adjoining property soon after Heliassé had departed for France, and thus she had never seen Sidney until the day of their meeting in the copse. Still I was content to watch the course events were taking, and so was not so very much surprised when Heliassé came to me one day, and said, —

"Robert Sidney has asked me to marry him, Martha."

"And you have said yes?"

"I have said yes. Do you think I have done right?"

"If you love him, I think you have; but he is" —

I hesitated to allude to the discrepancy in their ages. I hardly know why, for Heliassé was not sensitive on the subject. Indeed, she had no reason to be.

"He is younger than I, you would say. I know it. I am thirty, and he is only twenty-seven. Well, that's not much, and I love him, — yes: I do love him."

She spoke the words in a kind of rapture; and I believed her.

"He knows of your child?" I asked.

"Of Floride? Yes, Martha. I know your thoughts. You think I am hasty in taking this step; but listen. I love this man as I never loved my husband. You never knew of the unhappy years I passed in France, — you never dreamed that I was other than I seemed to you. I had to write home cheerily to give my father no reason for anxiety on my account; but in all those weary years

I was not happy. This man has in him qualities which my husband never had. He can give me what my husband would not give. I am no longer a girl of fifteen, and I know that this love is true and earnest."

And so she argued with me. As if I had offered an objection, or thought for an instant to dispute my mistress's right to marry whom she chose. Yet this attempt to justify herself for the step seemed like the result of some haunting presentiment of approaching evil.

In a year from Heliassé's return she was married to Robert Sidney. This time I was not ill, but was able to superintend most of the in-door details of the wedding. And a merry wedding it was, quite worth describing if it were not that this little story has already taken too long in telling.

It was arranged that the happy pair should take up their residence at The Willows; for Mr. Marbury would not consent to part with Heliassé again. So when the wedding was over, and Heliassé and her husband had performed their bridal journey, and returned, we settled down once more into the old life which ever flowed so placidly and sweetly at The Willows.

Four years is a long time; but to Sidney and his new wife I doubt not they passed only too quickly. At the end of that time Floride was to come home, and of course The Willows was once more thrown into a bustle. I think none of us were quite prepared for the surprise which awaited us on her arrival. On my part, I had pictured the child of Heliassé as a very little girl of twelve or thirteen, — though I well knew that she was more than eighteen, — and so I was filled with an almost ludicrous amazement, one cold October evening, when Heliassé screamed "Floride!" and, turning, I saw upon the threshold a perfect woman, beautiful and radiant as a heavenly dream. And this was Floride.

And she was indeed beautiful. The promise of her childhood had been more than fulfilled. Had Heliassé been less dear to me than she was, I would have said that Floride was the most lovely of the two. As matters stood, I could not that night decide between them. Sidney remained in the middle of the room, where he had arisen from his chair, rooted to the spot by this bewildering vision. It was not until Floride's greeting with her mother was over that he recovered from his evident aston-

ishment. Then Heliassé presented her to him.

"Floride, this is your stepfather. Robert, here is your — daughter."

Floride put out her little hand demurely, raised her brown eyes to Sidney's face for an instant archly, and struggled to repress a roguish smile which was dimpling in the corners of her mouth. There was something so ludicrous in their respective positions, with scarcely ten years between them (and no ordinary observer would have said that there were more than five), that both, after hesitating a moment, broke into a laugh together.

And that laugh, as after-events were to prove, was the death-knell of Heliassé. Ringing out pure, sweet, and clear in the atmosphere of the room, that silvery peal from the lips of the beautiful being before me was the beginning of the terrible drama which I was destined to see played out upon that little household stage at The Willows. Happy were we that we could not then lift the veil of the dreadful future.

"You are not the Floride that I expected to see," said Sidney hesitatingly. "You are taller, and — handsomer."

Floride blushed, and cast down her eyes.

"You will find your new father a consummate flatterer, Floride," said Heliassé, laughing.

"And, as I am to stand in that relation, there were all going wrong. Floride was too beautiful, and Sidney was too young. Their intercourse from day to day savored strongly of flirtation. They ought never to have been brought together. It was a dangerous relation for such as they to occupy to each other; and I was not at all sure that Sidney's love for Heliassé or Floride's sense of propriety would be proof against so obvious a temptation.

"And I sha' n't believe that you mean a word of it," said Floride.

And, after that first meeting, the acquaintance between these two progressed rapidly. I could not but feel that in some way we were all going wrong. Floride was too beautiful, and Sidney was too young. Their intercourse from day to day savored strongly of flirtation. They ought never to have been brought together. It was a dangerous relation for such as they to occupy to each other; and I was not at all sure that Sidney's love for Heliassé or Floride's sense of propriety would be proof against so obvious a temptation.

I had good reason for my fears; for it was soon evident that Sidney — young, vacillating, and impressionable — could not resist the attraction of Floride's marvelous beauty. It was not the girl's fault. She made no effort to enslave him. For the gifts which nature had given her she was not ac-

countable; and surely she could not be blamed for recognizing that subtle influence which Sidney exercised over all with whom he came in contact, when her mother, whose experience of mankind was of seventeen years' longer duration than Floride's, had succumbed to it.

As for Heliassé, she could not help perceiving the growing intimacy between her husband and her daughter. That it worried her, I could not doubt; but how cruelly it was wringing her heart I did not dream until one night, weeks after that first meeting on Floride's arrival, when she came to me, and said in a voice which seemed to me freezingly cold and hard, —

"Robert is fond of Floride, is he not?"

"And he ought to be, surely," I said, in reply.

"Yes: I suppose so. Do you think Floride likes him?"

"I hope she does," I replied, "for her mother's sake, at least."

"Do you think she *loves* him?"

She said this fiercely, standing still before me, and twisting her handkerchief tightly as she spoke.

"Why, Heliassé!" I exclaimed, "what is the matter? You do not believe" —

"I am ready to believe almost anything," she replied, beginning to walk nervously to and fro across the room. "Have n't you seen it? Have n't you watched them, day after day, week after week? Don't you *know* that they are fond of each other? O God! keep me from hating my own child!"

She dropped on her knees at my feet, and buried her face in my lap, her whole frame quivering convulsively.

"Heliassé," I said, smoothing her bright hair soothingly, "this is mere fancy. Robert feels an interest in Floride, and that is right. He is her protector now, and stands in place of the father she has lost; but I do not believe that there lingers in his mind a single thought of unfaithfulness to you. He may love Floride, but not in the way you fear."

"Do you believe it?" she asked, raising her face to mine. "Oh! if I could but be sure of it!"

"I do believe it," I replied; "and I think he would be grieved beyond measure if he knew that you could for a moment doubt it."

But, although I thus tried to re-assure Heliassé, I was not without many misgiv-

ings. Those long walks with Floride grew longer, the chance meetings between Sidney and herself became more and more frequent.

Heliassé watched them both like a cat; but she could not be ubiquitous. Even I could see that these meetings were at last the result of carefully laid schemes on Sidney's part; for from first to last I think Floride was innocent of any attempt at concealment or deception. She had become too infatuated to know the consequence of the step she was taking. Yet, at the moments when Heliassé could not be near, Sidney was sure to be found at Floride's side.

I knew that Heliassé was working herself into a passionate frenzy. I knew that she was rapidly becoming jealous of her own flesh and blood. Understanding her nature as I did, I trembled for the consequences, but saw no way to avert them.

At last, one night, there came a crisis. We were sitting in the long drawing-room, — Heliassé and I, — watching from the windows the evening shadows creep slowly across the lawn, when Floride burst in at the door, hot, flushed, and trembling with excitement.

"O mother! mother!" she cried, dropping on her knees before Heliassé, and wringing her hands, — "O mother! mother! what shall I do?"

"What has happened, child?" asked Heliassé soothingly. "What has frightened you so?"

"He has said — he has asked me — oh! I don't know what it was," cried the poor girl, bursting into a flood of tears. "I hardly stopped to hear him out."

Instinctively divining the cause of Floride's excitement, I arose to leave the room; but Heliassé motioned me to remain.

"We have no secrets from you, Martha," she said.

Then raising her daughter's face between her hands, she looked down into her swimming eyes.

"Whom do you mean?" she asked, her bosom heaving with a sudden fear; "and what has he said?"

"It was Robert!" sobbed the girl. "He asked me to become his wife!"

God grant that never again may I see the look which came into the face of Heliassé, as she listened to those words. In an instant she had risen to her feet, while Flo-

ride crouched before her, terrified and trembling.

"My husband asked you to become his wife!" she repeated, in a voice which seemed to choke her, so intense was the passion which convulsed her whole frame. "My husband wishes to marry my daughter! And what are you," she broke forth fiercely; "what are you, that you have dared to come between us? What are you, that you should use your vile arts to win him from me? Oh, accursed be the hour when I gave you birth! A curse on your false face that has bewitched him! Curse you! Curse you!"

In her frenzy she clenched her hands hard together as she pronounced these terrible words; and now she struck Floride a heavy, cruel blow upon the cheek, and turned away toward the window.

I saw the blood come quick and hot into the face of Floride, as she drew back hastily. I knew that she was a proud girl, and not one to brook an insult such as this, even though the hand which inflicted it had been her mother's.

I tried to speak; but my heart failed me, and I could only look on, trembling. What Floride would have said, I know not; for at that moment the door opened, and Sidney entered, pale as death itself. Heliassé turned instantly, and confronted him.

"Do you love this girl?" she asked calmly.

He opened his lips to answer; but Floride came quickly to his side, and laid her head upon his breast. He looked down into her face with a joyful light in his eyes, and kissed her lips tenderly.

That was his answer to Heliassé.

"Robert," cried Heliassé wildly, "what have I done? What have I done?"

He turned away his face, that he might not see her.

"I cannot help it," he said brokenly. "God knows how I have fought against it. It is not your fault. I am unworthy of your love, or of the love of this poor child. But what am I to do? You brought her here, and now I love Floride the best."

She stood before him for a moment, motionless as a statue, looking, not at him, but at Floride clinging to him, and trembling within his arms. She stepped forward a pace or two, as if to touch them, tottered for an instant dizzily, then fell senseless on the floor at their feet.

I think that then Floride forgot the blow with which her cheek was still tingling, and that Sidney's heart overflowed with pity and remorse. They bent over Heliassé with me, Floride crying piteously, and Sidney calling helplessly upon his wife to forgive him, and to speak to him. We carried her up-stairs, all limp and helpless as she was, and placed her on the bed in her own room.

She opened her eyes, after a while, and asked to be left alone; and so, reluctantly, we went away. Ah! we little knew, when we left her that night lying there so quietly and peacefully, while the evening shadows gathered around The Willows, what the morrow had in store, or dreamed of the nearness of that darker and more terrible shadow which was so soon to enwrap Heliassé, and shut her out from our sight forever.

All night long Robert Sidney paced the floor of the library, with the door locked against all intruders. All night long Floride sobbed in her room; while I lay awake listening to the wind, which had risen since the sunset, and which now howled drearily about the house, filling me with the direst misapprehensions and presentiments of evil. I could not sleep. The terrible events of the past few hours, the sighing of the approaching storm, the ceaseless tramp of Sidney in the room below, placed me in a state of wakefulness. Once I fancied I heard a movement in the room of Heliassé, which was next to mine, and half resolved to call to her; but the sounds ceased, and I refrained from disturbing her.

Toward daylight, I fell into a fitful slumber, from which I was awakened by a violent shaking of my door, and the voice of Sidney crying,—

"Martha! Martha! for God's sake, where is Heliassé?"

I threw on a portion of my clothing, and opened the door. Sidney stood there, white as marble.

"I found this in her room," he said, hurriedly thrusting a piece of paper into my hand. "What does it mean? Where has she gone? Can you tell me?"

I took the paper mechanically, and read the following, as though in a dream:—

"SIDNEY,—Do not try to follow me, for it will be useless. If you ever find me, it will be after it is too late for me to say any better farewell than this. Do not reproach

yourself for anything that you have done. You could not help it, and I forgive you. If you marry Floride, be faithful to her, and love her truly and well. That you give to her a better love than that which I had too fondly hoped was mine, is the last wish of the wife who is dead to you forevermore.  
HELIASSE."

As I let the letter drop from my trembling fingers, there flashed across me at that instant a vision of the spot where Sidney and Heliassé had first come together,—the slimy swamp, with its rank tufts of reeds and rushes; the twilight shade of the willow copse; and the black and horrible pool into which Sidney had that day cast the serpent. An indefinable fear seized upon me; and a dreadful conviction, for which I cannot to this day account, made me shriek aloud,—

"Heliassé has gone to the willows. Seek there for her, first of all."

In a few moments the entire household was aroused; and we all, with the exception of old Mr. Marbury, who had remained in happy unconsciousness of all the trouble, from first to last, ran quickly to the swamp, with no definite expectation of finding Heliassé, but with a vague impression on my part that there we should find some clue to her disappearance. The little arbor was empty; the vile pool near which it stood was calm and placid. The rising sun had begun to send a few ghastly rays to penetrate the dim recesses of the morass; and, peering anxiously about us on all sides, we called on Heliassé by name.

There was no answer to our cries. The place was as still and as quiet as death itself.

Sidney and Floride looked at me helplessly.

"Would it not be well," I asked, "to rake the pool?"

Sidney started violently, and turned deadly pale.

"My God!" he cried, "do you think she has drowned herself? Have I murdered her?"

I could not answer him, but only pointed silently to the pond.

He sat down weakly upon a log, and dispatched a servant for ropes and poles.

The man came back presently, bringing with him a long pike with a cruel hook on the end of it, such as we had used at vari-

ous times for rescuing a lost bucket from the well.

"Be careful," said Sidney, turning his head away.

The man nodded, and began to walk slowly around the pool, plunging his implement at intervals into the black water, while we all, except Sidney, looked on in breathless suspense. Floride sat at Sidney's feet, holding his hand in hers.

Twice the man's pole caught upon the bottom, and our hearts stood still. But the obstruction proved to be nothing more than a weed or a water-soaked log, and again the man moved on in his horrible search.

He had nearly made the circuit of the pool when his hook was stopped again. He raised it carefully, and the obstacle moved with it. Slowly it came toward the surface. A moment more, and a swash of the foul water revealed a portion of a woman's dress, and we all saw that it was the drapery of Heliasse.

Floride screamed, and buried her face in her hands.

Sidney rose quickly to his feet.

The man slowly drew his awful prize toward the shore, and lifted it out upon the bank.

It was Heliasse, cold and dead.

It is many years since the events which I have related were brought to a close.

Sidney and Floride are married now, and I hope and believe that they are happy. Cyril Marbury did not long survive his daughter, and I am no longer housekeeper at The Willows. The estate was sold into other hands, and Sidney and his still beautiful wife live far away.

So that I am free to tell the story of Heliasse Marbury's life, since her very name is now almost forgotten, save by those who were her fellow-players in that unhappy tragedy.

Heaven send peaceful rest to her spirit!

**THE VALUE OF SIMPLE REMEDIES.**

**BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.**

**"Just stand aside a wee bit, sirr: there's twa doctors here."**

The speaker was a policeman. I was the individual who had gotten inconveniently in the way of the "twa doctors," and the scene and the circumstances were as follow:—

I had been on a walking and fishing tour up Donside, and had returned one afternoon to the city. I suppose that, in my suit of humble tweed, and boots rendered less imposing from a coat of dust, it did not strike the policeman that I was a person of very much consequence, hence his remark. A gentleman had suddenly dropped insensible in the street, and a little mob, which I helped to compose, had gathered around him.

The "twa doctors," whom I hastened to give place to, were evidently fledglings, if not indeed merely medical students. They were dressed in the excess of fashion, with hats and collars of unexceptionable shape, and boots—oh, dear! I felt quite ashamed of mine. But the dandy doctors had the poor man carried into a shop, I following, partly out of curiosity, and partly in the hope that I might be of some little use. Now of all preposterous positions in which to place an insensible subject, what should the "twa doctors" do, but stick the patient upright in a chair with his head on his breast, and in well-mouthed English, coolly begin to learnedly discuss the probable nature of his seizure. "It might be apoplexy; or it might be syncope; but then.

on the other hand, it might be heart complaint." And so on, and so forth.

But, as it so happened, my interference was not wanted. From a back room, in bustled the shopkeeper's wife herself, a kind-hearted, true woman evidently, and evidently too a born nurse. She took in the situation at a glance; in a few moments the sufferer was conveyed into an inner room, and stretched on the sofa, with his head on a level with his body, the windows were thrown wide open, collar and neck-tie were loosened, water was dashed on the face, ammonia, in the humble garb of smelling-salts, held to his nostrils, and a little brandy and water allowed to trickle down the throat; and in a very short time I had the satisfaction of hearing the poor man sigh, and after a time he opened his eyes. I likewise had the satisfaction of seeing the "two doctors" take their departure, looking so absurd and foolish that I almost pitied them. I trust it was a lesson they did not soon forget. But I thought, as I walked back to my hotel, how invaluable that cleanly, bustling, smart, wee lady would be in a sick-chamber, and what a blessing for a medical man to have a second lieutenant like her to carry out his orders; for be it remembered that in sickness, scientific, sensible nursing is one-half the battle. "I am pretty sure," I continued to muse, "that everything about a sick-room would be as cheerful as cheerful could be, the bed spread tidy and clean, the linen aired, and the windows down without a draught. She herself, I am sure, would never wear a gloomy dress of black, nor a gown that rustled, nor shoes that creaked, nor would she whisper, nor ever look sad and mysterious, nor even seem to doubt the efficacy of the treatment, but ever seem confident of a quick return to the pleasant paths of health. No food would be cooked in the room; the bedroom utensils would be always kept covered, and no slop-pail ever appear inside the doorway. Nor with all this would she be over-indulgent, and the doctor's word would be law, and his orders carried out faithfully and to the letter.

Now by beginning my paper in this fashion, I own that I have taken an unaccountably roundabout way of getting to the text of my present sermon, which is merely this: never despise simple measures and simple remedies, for they have saved many a valuable life. I say this without prejudice to

the value of more scientific remedies in more skillful hands. By all means in every case of illness, that looks in the least serious, call in a regular practitioner, but nevertheless there are many things connected with medicine and the treatment of disease, that every wife or mother ought to know.

When our first parents, on account of their own pride and disobedience, were expelled from the gates of Eden, and were obliged to earn their bread with the sweat of their brows, it was not long, you may be sure, before sickness followed on the heels of sorrow. None, probably, of the more terrible diseases that decimate the ranks of people now-a-days, diseases that have grown out of ages of disregard or ignorance of the common rules of health, but troubles and complaints of a lesser order; yet had they all around them, presented to them by the bounteous hand of Nature, every requisite in a simple way for the prevention or alleviation of bodily distress. It could not have been long, for instance, ere they found out the medical value of fruit, or the life-reviving, health-giving virtues of water. Ripe fruits, eaten before breakfast of a summer's morning, form a most delightful and cooling aperient. A few stewed prunes, eaten after dinner on a winter's afternoon, are often better far than the best of pills. Indeed there are no medicines that are more abused than purgatives. Necessary they sometimes are, but only when exercise, with a due supply of fresh, well-cooked green vegetables, has failed to give relief. It should not be forgotten, either, that the habit of using aperients is one that grows upon the system, a state of matters that should not be tolerated. The simplest aperients are the best. Blue pill and podophyllin are in my opinion undeservedly favorites, and their use ought often to be discarded, in favor of mild doses of castor-oil, the disagreeable flavor of which may be disguised by taking it floating on some cordial spirit, or else on well-spiced beef-tea. A dessert-spoonful of cream of tartar, with half the quantity of carbonate of soda, in a tumbler of water, is a gentle laxative if taken before breakfast. Some of the bitter waters, as those of Pullna or Friedrichshall, as imported and sold by chemists, are in many cases very valuable aperients, and always certain in their action.

Of all diseases incident to our country at this season of the year, those to which the



generic name of "colds" is given are the most common. And yet, if taken in time, nothing is more easily got over. As soon as the chilliness, with the slight fever, the aching of the bones, and general feeling of illness, appear, no time should be lost in driving the enemy from his stronghold. A full dose of quinine can do naught save good, a mustard foot-bath, ten grains of Dover's powder, and a nice warm ginger drink with a glass of sherry or claret in it, will generally induce perspiration, and even sleep; and the patient will awake in the morning a little weak, but well. What an amount of good a large mustard poultice often does when applied to the chest, when it feels tight and dry, or simple friction with turpentine poured over a morsel of flannel wrung from hot water! Colds may usually be prevented by ordinary care; those subject to them should always have dry, warm feet, and protect the arms and chest by flannel. Cod-liver oil in moderate doses, with a short course of sirup of iodide of iron, or some simple bitter tonic, taken in November, is a good protection and shield against the rigors of the coming winter.

I believe that persons who are in the habit of using the cold bath every morning regularly, as soon as they jump out of bed, seldom suffer from colds, or from cold itself—that is, they can bear the latter better than if they took no bath. The ordinary matutinal bath is of great service in old-standing cases of asthma; if the water is mixed with a portion of sea-salt it will be all the more valuable. Nervous diseases and hysteria are greatly benefited by the use of the shower-bath, or sponge-bath, and so is nearly every ailment in which there is a want of tone in the system, always provided that there is no internal disease.

There is a class of cases with which we medical men not unfrequently meet, the sufferers in which are young men of the ages of from seventeen to twenty or over, who have, perhaps from over-study, fallen into a state of nervous and mental depression, and are but little able or willing on that account to follow their usual avocations. They suffer occasionally from dimness of sight, noises in the head, loss of memory, transient giddiness, headaches, and a variety of mental distresses too tedious to name, while at the same time their digestive organs are much out of order.

The treatment to be adopted is simple

enough: the bath every morning, beginning with the tepid and getting gradually down to the cold; enforced exercise, but exercise with an aim, consequently the best form is some kind of manly game, early hours, and temperance in everything. Cod-liver oil, taken for months, does great good in such cases, and an occasional course of tonics—not iron—probably the best is the hypophosphite of soda, with phosphoric acid, and a bitter tonic. The compound infusion of oranges, which forms such a pleasant and useful adjunct to many tonic medicines, is easily made as follows: Take of bitter-orange-peel cut small a quarter of an ounce, lemon-peel fresh and cut small a dram, bruised cloves half a dram. Infuse like tea in half a pint of boiling water for fifteen minutes.

Every housewife should know, or does know, the value of what is called "a good sweat," especially when followed by sleep. An easy way of securing this is to wring a blanket out of hot water, and wrap it round the patient's body, packing him round with three or more dry blankets. After he has lain in these for half an hour, he must be rubbed dry with hot towels, and afterward tucked up comfortably for the night.

The mustard foot-bath is a well-known remedy and a very useful one in cases of headaches, congestion of the head or of the chest, as at the commencement of common colds. About two ounces of mustard are mixed with a bucket of water as hot as can be borne, and it should be used the last thing at night.

In debility, nervousness, or chronic rheumatism, a quarter of a pound of bay-salt to two gallons of tepid water, as a morning sponge-bath, is often of the greatest utility. Fomentations are often of the utmost value in easing the pains of inflammation, either external or internal. They are at the same time free from danger. In fomenting any portion of the body you must have two pieces of flannel, one to put on immediately the other loses its high temperature. The flannels are thus applied time about, and are wrung from water as hot as the hand can bear it. Adding a handful or two of mustard to the water causes the skin to become quickly reddened. The poppy-head fomentation is an old favorite. To make it, boil two ounces of bruised poppy-heads, seeds and all, in a pint and a half of water, for ten minutes. Strain it, and then add as

much water as will make it up to a pint. Alum is a very good astringent; one grain of it to an ounce of water makes a delightful eye-wash; as a gargle in sore throat, mix two teaspoonfuls in an eight-ounce bottle of water. Half that quantity of chlorate of potash to the same quantity of water is another nice gargle. What a nice cooling fever-drink does this chlorate of potash make! For this purpose, add sixty grains to a pint of pure water, and this may be drunk in the course of twenty-four hours. It not only cools the blood, but quenches thirst, and cleans the tongue.

In some cases of sore throat, with much swelling and difficulty of swallowing, a leech or two applied under the ankle of the jaw may act like a charm. To apply a leech properly, you must first have carefully washed the part, but leave no soap on it. If he refuses to stick, coax him to bite, by moistening the skin with a little sweet milk. Let him remain on till he drops off, then encourage the bleeding by putting on a nice warm poultice. But it is not every one, by the way, who knows how to make and spread a poultice. Poultices ought to be of proper consistency and spread thickly, and always covered over with oiled silk to prevent them from drying, if meant to be worn any length of time. Simple remedies are often called for, to relieve "pain, that perfect misery, and worst of ills, that, excessive, overturns all patience." I should think it did. Burns, the poet, when suffering from the toothache, overturned the chairs —

"He kicked the sma' stools o'er the mickle."

Quinine in two-grain doses thrice a day gives great relief in neuralgia. So does a course of cod-liver oil if there be debility, or any lowering of the nervous system. Three or four twenty-grain doses of sal-ammoniac in water, one being taken at the end of every hour, often act like magic in curing neuralgia. If it does give relief, it should be taken three times a day for a fortnight after. This sal-ammoniac is useful in another way; it makes a nice cooling lotion to inflamed surfaces, thus: dissolve two teaspoonfuls of it with the same quantity of saltpetre in a pint of water, add a little vinegar, and apply by means of one layer of rag, but do not cover up.

Emetics are medicines that cause vomiting. They are by no means to be despised, although they may be abused. It is no doubt well known to my readers, that they are very useful in clearing the stomach of indigestible matter. But they are also very successfully used early in the commencement of febrile ailments, and the shock they give to the system often succeeds in cutting short an attack.

Just one word of warning with regard to tonics. Although they take some time to do their work, they are notwithstanding powerful remedies if judiciously administered, and just as powerful for evil if indiscriminately used. Their chief virtue lies in their capability of restoring diminished tone and vitality, but if the secretions are out of order, or the stomach is irritable, these matters must first be put straight by a gentle course of simple aperients, or the giving of tonics will do more harm than good.

## THE VEILED PICTURE.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

## CHAPTER I.

Catharine Merle was the name they called me by. I had never known a mother's care or a father's love. My mother had died in giving me life, and three months after my birth my father was lost at sea.

Old Jacob Sealiff and his wife had taken pity on my helplessness, and in memory of some olden kindness received at the hand of my mother, they adopted me, and reared me with their own. My father had left a small property, well invested, the interest of which sufficed for my clothing and the scanty schooling the hamlet of Rockford afforded.

The playmate and constant companion of Burke Sealiff, I came up to girlhood. We were inseparable. We spent whole days together on the rocks above the sea, building fantastic temples from the shells and many-colored pebbles, or reading weird old romances that had been a part of my birth-right.

Burke Sealiffe was not like ordinary fisher boys. His soul was grander, his conceptions wider, his range of mental vision higher and more expansive. His face told you something of his character. Naturally of a pale complexion, but darkened greatly by exposure to the weather, lit up by great blue eyes beneath tawny golden hair, with a mouth now gentle and tender as a woman's, and then firm as a rock, maidens called him handsome, — I called him simply grand.

At the age of fourteen came my first grief upon me. My father's will, made just before setting out on that last voyage, provided that should the child then expected to inherit his slender possessions survive to the age of fourteen, he or she, as the case might be, should be sent to the seminary at Lownd, and remain there during the three years necessary to obtain a diploma.

Directions relative to the carrying out of this injunction were given with singular minuteness, and I could never rid myself of the idea that my father must have looked into the future with the eyes of prescience,

and seen there some vague indication of his early death.

It was a great sorrow for me to leave Rockford. I dreaded the loss of my wild sweet freedom. I shrank from the contact of strangers, and I should miss Burke so much.

But my father's wishes were immovably sacred to me; and, besides, I yearned, half unconsciously, for broader views of life than the quiet existence that Rockford gave me, and exerted myself to be brave and hopeful when I said good-by to my foster-parents.

Well, I have neither space nor inclination to particularize. I suppose my experience at school was like that of most other different, country-bred girls. I met with some rude handling, some sharp rebukes, had my pride more than once stirred to the lower depth, and came out of it all an independent, somewhat willful, young lady, who was declared "finished," by the pink-tinted sheet tied with rose-colored ribbons, that stamped me a graduate of Lownd Seminary.

Probably my acquirements were quite on an average with those of the members of my class. I could draw a little, paint a little, play a little, and had a tolerable smattering of French, Latin, and German.

Beautiful I was not, nor yet handsome even: my straight black hair, dark complexion, and gray eyes, gave me no claim to admiration. The free, out-of-door life at Rockford had endowed me with firm health, and developed my form beyond the liteness and symmetry usually characterizing the anatomy of an American school-girl.

Lownd was a hundred and twenty miles distant from Rockford, and a large part of the journey must be made by stage-coach.

Toward the close of the first day, it set in to rain, not an honest downright outpouring, but a slow melancholy drizzle, of all things the most torturing.

The mud impeded our progress, and the fat lazy horses could, by no ingenuity on the part of the driver, be coaxed out of a walk.

There was only one passenger beside my-

self, a corpulent old farmer, who preferred the outside of the coach even in a storm.

I was left to my own devices. I tried to read, but the dim light wearied my eyes, my netting had lost its charms, and even looking out of the windows offered little inducement. An oddly constructed garden paling drew my attention, and leaning out to look beyond it, I saw half hidden in a thicket of giant oaks, the growth of a previous century, the sharp gables, the *outré* projections of a large stone house, which might have been built ages before for any resemblance it bore to the structures of today.

I fell to speculating on the house, and wondering what it contained by way of inhabitants. A sudden sweep in the road revealed it to me more fully defined against the leaden sky, its tall chimneys and sombre gateways breaking out of the mass of greenery like mountain peaks from a cloud of fog.

While I was gazing, there was a thump, a plunge, a great demonstration of vocal power on the part of the driver, and, a moment after, I came to the realization that the stage had upset, and I was lying beneath the *debris*.

As I could not stir without help, there was nothing for it but to keep quiet. I collected my faculties, and wondered if I were hurt. My right arm felt a little stiff, perhaps it had got cramped under me. I tried to lift it, but the strength had gone out of it. I desisted, and called at the top of my voice to the driver.

Presently I heard his reply, delivered partly to me, and partly to the other passenger, —

"Lord, sir! she 's alive! that 's a woman's voice. 'Pears to me she must be hurt down there under the trunks and things. If that hind wheel had n't a come off, cuss it! I 've known 't was rather loose this long spell, and now it 's got me into a pretty mess! Bellmaine was four miles off, and there was no house within a mile but the Rookery; although you might as well ask for help of a tomb-stone as of Rex Hollingford."

"Sho!" exclaimed the voice of the farmer, "you don't say! But then this is an uncommon case, and mahyap he 'll consider it."

"Humph! we shall see," replied the other, and by that time they had unearthed

me, and I staggered to my feet. So strangely dizzy I felt that for a moment I could hardly support myself, but the cold rain very soon acted as a restorative.

John Morison, the driver, was rapping at the gate of the Rookery. It was opened from within, and a gray head thrust out.

"The stage has upset, and here 's a young woman what maybe's hurt some, and wants to come in out of the rain, while we see what can be done."

"No, sir; my master receives no visitors," returned the man, in an icy tone.

I stepped forward.

"I am not a visitor, and I do not wish to see your master," I said, firmly; "but I will go in, by your leave," and before he could shut the door in my face, as he evidently prepared to do, I had stepped past him.

I walked quickly up to the hall door, and was about to rap, when it opened, and I was confronted by a tall, dark-visaged man, somewhere near thirty years of age; and a couple of black dogs who flew at me with savage glee.

I struck the larger one a blow with my parasol, and was about to repeat the thing, when the master bade them begone.

"I want to come in," I said; "the stage has been upset, and I am cold and wet."

I think he would have ordered me off as he did the dogs had it been politic; as it was, he uttered an expressive "Humph!" and then opened the door of a large apartment, in which a fire was burning on the hearth.

I needed no second invitation to enter, for I found that in this house the guest must take the initiative, so I went in and seated myself in the best chair I could find. The great door shut me in with a resounding clash, and I took the opportunity of solitude to look about me.

As I have already said the room was large, and it was finished in a style of solid elegance rarely seen this side the water. The walls were of dark oak, the windows deep and heavy, the cornices carved with many a strange device, and in the centre of the apartment there was a huge marble vase from whence sprung a luxuriant vine of English ivy. A somewhat fanciful trellis conducted this mass of green over the south wall, until it lost itself in the dark green damask of the window hangings.

Evidently Mr. Hollingford admired green.

The floor was covered with green and gold, and the upholstery was the same.

Ornaments there were none, unless the picture at the foot of the room came under that head, and that was closely covered with a black cloth. A tortoise-shell cat dozed on one of the broad window-seats, but there was no other sign of occupancy.

My curiosity satisfied, I began to think of myself. The dull pain in my arm grew momentarily worse, and it required but little surgical skill to determine that the bone was broken. I arrived at that conclusion with consternation. Here, indeed, was a delectable piece of business! A hundred miles from home, thrown into the den of an uncivilized being, with a broken arm, and the prospect of long days of languor and pain before me.

I felt exactly like crying, but I flattered myself I had done with that absurdity. I swallowed down my emotion bravely, and rallied my forces. I had got into the Rookery through impudence; from first to last I would put a bold face on the matter.

I pulled the bell-cord. A man entered, aged and morose looking. He cast at me a look of supreme amazement. *Perhaps I was the first specimen of womankind he had ever seen.*

"I want some one to go for a surgeon," I said loftily; "my arm is broken. You will be kind enough to see that it is attended to immediately."

He favored me with another stare, more prolonged than the first, and retired. I heard a colloquy in the hall, and recognized the voice of Rex Hollingford. Directly, I heard the clatter of a receding horse's hoofs, and concluded that a messenger had been despatched to do my bidding.

It seemed an age before any one came, and then it was Mr. Hollingford, followed by a young, handsome, frank-faced man, who introduced himself as Dr. Fairfax. He was kind and cordial, and very gentle.

When the operation of setting the bone was over, Dr. Fairfax turned to Mr. Hollingford, and inquired if I could have good nursing. That gentleman grunted,—you could call it nothing else. Dr. Fairfax repeated the question.

"Perhaps so," returned my host grimly; "I know nothing about it."

"Well, I will myself see to it," said the doctor. "I will send up a nurse from the village. Meanwhile Miss Merle, be brave,

—all savages are not cannibals," with a covert glance at Mr. Hollingford.

My nurse came an hour afterward,—a pleasant, motherly old lady, just suited to my mind.

Mrs. Martin was a treasure of a nurse. She evidently stood slightly in awe of our grim entertainer, but she was faithful to me, and regardful of my wishes.

Mr. Hollingford had not been niggardly. He gave me a beautiful chamber on the second floor overlooking the gardens, and furnished in a more luxurious style than anything to which I had been accustomed.

I convalesced slowly. Just as I had hoped to get out a fever set in, and for three weeks I suffered intensely.

Dr. Fairfax visited me daily, comforting me all he could. Indeed, I owe him a debt of gratitude for his kind thoughtfulness,—a debt which I am fearful I shall never discharge.

I had written, at the very first, to my friends in Rockford, saying that I was slightly hurt, and in good hands. They must not feel uneasy about me.

After a while I was able to sit up. I recovered my strength fast. *The first use I made of it was to go down-stairs and search for Mr. Hollingford.* But he was not to be found. Then I wandered through the great, cheerless rooms, and found myself at last standing in the sitting-room before the veiled picture. I was tortured with an irresistible desire to lift the covering. *I confess to being a woman, with a woman's full share of curiosity.* I mounted an ottoman, hesitated a moment, and then drew aside the drapery. Such a face as looked out at me! Handsome, haughty, royal in its pride. A young face, shadowed by masses of brown, bright hair,—illuminated by eyes fathomless as the stormy sea. The sensitive scarlet mouth was half hidden in the flow of the beard, and the curve of one white hand resting on a pedestal was perfect.

I gazed upon it long and earnestly, and the conviction grew upon me. Somewhere I had seen a kin to this face.

A step startled me, and turning I met the angry blaze of Rex Hollingford's eyes.

The identity was established to my satisfaction. This beautiful picture was formed on the same plan as that of my saturnine host.

Mr. Hollingford strode forward, and seiz-

ing me rudely by the shoulder drew me down from the ottoman and away from the picture. His rough grasp hurt me fearfully, but I would have suffered agonies before I would have cried out before him.

He saw what he had done by my pallid face.

"Now, I have hurt you! I had forgotten your injured arm. Will you excuse me?"

His stern visage softened, — he was wondrously like the picture, now.

"Thank you," I said, nonchalantly, "I shall do very well. And I shall take the very first opportunity to scrutinize that piece of art at my leisure."

"How dare you?" he hissed through his shut teeth.

"How dare I! What, look at a picture? Such things were made to be looked at, and this is well worth the trouble. Might I take the liberty?" —

"No! you may take no more liberties, if you please. You shield your unparalleled impudence behind your womanhood, and sit there in supreme safety."

"And what then?"

"Remember there is a limit to my endurance. I am no lady's courtier to be blind to transgressions and offences because a woman happens to be the transgressor."

"That is nothing to me, Mr. Hollingford. I do not care for your forgiveness at all. I put you entirely out of the question."

He colored.

"Perhaps you would like to put me out of the house, as well?"

"I do not desire to, provided you are rational. But I am here, and must amuse myself some way. It's insufferably dull."

"There is Dr. Fairfax."

"True. And very grateful am I. I wish he were host, instead of you."

Mr. Hollingford laughed. That laugh was a pleasant thing to hear. It broke up all the cold currents of pride in the man's nature.

"Miss Merle, I give you credit for politeness. You must have graduated at a finishing school."

"Yes, sir; at the Lownd Seminary. Would you like to see my diploma?"

"Confound the diploma!"

I left him, and went up to my chamber. Mrs. Martin was knitting by the window; I took a seat near her.

"Mrs. Martin."

"What, dear?"

"What do you know of Rex Hollingford, and this queer old Rookery?"

"Nothing worth relating. There is a history connected with the place, people say, but no one has the key to decipher it. Only conjecture gives it any sort of connection. And that is not to be depended upon."

"Has the master brothers or sisters?"

"None living. At least, I know of none. He had a brother once, a fine, handsome lad, God rest him."

I left questioning the old lady, and turned to reading. The book was dull. I went to the window, — it was raining heavily.

I wandered about aimlessly. I opened the door leading into the hall and, looked out. A broad flight of stairs led upward. I began mounting them slowly. I had nothing to do, and I liked old houses.

A hall of similar size as that below met me at the landing. At a venture, I took the right-hand passage, — there were several of them, — and was stopped at length by a mahogany door with a ground-glass top. "Ah!" I thought, "this must be the library, and I can get something interesting to read."

I opened the door and entered the apartment. It was not a library, I saw at a glance. It looked more like a private sitting-room, but it had been so long unused that dust had completely covered the costly furniture, and cobwebs hung unmolested from the burners of the gilt chandelier. I looked carefully about the room. I was sure it had been a woman's. There was a bunch of dried flowers on a table, and a dainty white silk glove lying on the carpet beneath. To what noble lady of the Hollingford family did it belong? And was the hand that once filled it still among those clasped by beloved ones? or was it mouldering back to dust in some sculptured mausoleum?

In the south side of the room was a second door, blocked up by a sofa pushed against it. I put the barrier aside. All this was very wrong, I know; but I make no apology for doing thus, except that I was worn and weary with the prison life I had led for the past few weeks, and longed for action of some kind. The door shut hollowly behind me, and left me in the thick gloom of a lofty apartment, into whose closely curtained windows no ray of sunshine could penetrate.

Gradually, as my eyes became accustomed to the darkness, objects came out of the mirk and made themselves recognizable. I stood in a bed-chamber. The hangings of the low couch were blue; the carpet was blue and buff; the general harmonizing tint throughout told me that she who had once occupied this mysterious chamber had been a blonde, with blue eyes, and hair of gold.

Dust, mould even, had gathered on the furniture, and the air was damp and heavy with age. I sat down in one of the wide window-seats, and gave myself up to reverie.

There was a mystery. Of course. Whoever knew a house like the Rookery without its own eventful history of love, and loss, and mayhap-crime?

How long I sat there I do not know. All was quiet save the rough dashing of the rain against the windows, and the unbroken flap of a broken vine that still clasped the balcony. The door unclosed, and Mr. Hollingford entered. Then I realized fully what I had done, and grew very much ashamed of myself. Perhaps he would be seriously offended with me, as he certainly had a right to be.

I peeped at him through the interstices of the curtain. His face, seen indistinctly in the dim light, looked so pale and troubled that I longed to go to him and give him my sympathy,—silently, perhaps, but still so that he would understand it.

He took a chair, and sitting down by the side of the couch, laid his head wearily upon the pillow.

"Argemorne! O Argemorne!" he muttered below his breath, "what were you that you should shipwreck two lives?"

I felt that I might witness too much. I got down from the window and went to his side.

"Mr. Hollingford, I am here."

He started to his feet,—I could not tell if he were angry or not, but his voice had in it more of grief than of anger.

"Child," he said, "it will be better for you to remain below. These old rooms, sacred to dust and memory, are all unfitted to your youth and happiness."

I did not resist the impulse I felt. I laid my hand on his forehead.

"I am sorry for you, Mr. Hollingford."

He crushed my hand in both of his, and then flung it from him.

"Sorry!" he repeated in a choked voice.

"Come here?"

He drew me to the east window, and flinging open the casement bade me look out.

I saw what I had never observed before from any other part of the house. A spacious inclosure, surrounded by a very high, close fence, and set around with huge old oaks. In the centre a gleaming shaft of white marble.

I gave Mr. Hollingford a look of inquiry.

"There sleeps my only brother, my sole kin," he said, gloomily; "and *she* murdered him! *she* made me what I am! There, leave me instantly: I would be alone."

I obeyed him without a word, and went to my room, oppressed strangely with this vague mystery. But I made no further efforts to fathom it. Mr. Hollingford's secrets were his own. I, as a stranger, had no right to seek to penetrate them.

Two days afterward, Burke Sealiff came for me. They had got so anxious at Rockford, that he had taken his own horse, and come to take me home.

Mr. Hollingford shut me into the parlor when I was all ready to depart. I offered him money to pay for the trouble I had occasioned to the household at the Rookery. He flung it back with haughty scorn.

"Nothing on that subject, if you please, Miss Merle. Your stay here has been none of the pleasantest."

"On the contrary, I have keenly enjoyed it," I said.

"Because of Fairfax?"

"Partly."

"He will be inconsolable."

"Not he,—he is too sensible. None but silly people are affected by anything of the kind to which you refer."

"I wish I could see it in that light. But you will come again?"

"Perhaps."

"Promise me fully."

"Yes, I will come again some time."

"Give me a pledge."

I took a knot of blonde ribbon from my collar, and laid it in his hand.

"Thank you. I accept it. And when I send this to you, wherever you may be, and under whatever circumstances, you are to come to me; to me here,—at the Rookery."

"But"—

"No conditions, if you please. You owe me something for my unexampled hospitality. Say yes, at once."

"Yes, then."

"Wear this in remembrance."

And he put upon my finger a ring of twisted gold, gemmed with opals.

"Good-by, Mr. Hollingford."

"Good-by, Miss Merle."

He did not touch my hand, or go to the door with me. I left him standing, with folded arms, in the centre of the apartment.

Burke's fine face grew cloudy at the length of our leave-taking; but it soon cleared, and fifteen minutes afterward Mr. Hollingford and the Rookery were entirely forgotten in the hundred and one things we had to ask each other.

## CHAPTER II.

Rockford was much the same. Towns of that description are not greatly liable to change.

My foster parents had a few more gray hairs, perhaps,—but they were as kind as ever, and glad to welcome home their wanderer.

But Burke,—I hardly knew what to make of Burke. The prime favorite of all the village girls, handsome, young, with perfect health,—what should make him subject to such fits of dejection? I questioned him closely. He laughed, and said he was blue. He went about with me on the same old footing,—and yet he was not the same. I treated him like a brother, and he was polite to me as to an utter stranger.

One day we went out sailing. The weather was serene and fine, and there was a full moon. The sun declined. Burke prepared to return home. The promise of the evening tempted me.

"Let us go home by the Point of Rocks, Burke."

"It will be rough tonight, Cathy. The tide sets in heavily, and it is always dangerous that way."

"Are you afraid?" I asked tauntingly,—  
"you, the son of a sailor?"

"Afraid!" What a look of contempt crossed his face. "You shall see!"

He turned the prow of the boat outward, and beneath the impetus of his strong arm we literally flew over the water.

Full soon I realized my folly in daring him to come this way. The sharp, pointed rocks around the shore were white as snow with foam, and the heavy swirl of the incoming tide tossed our boat like an acorn-cup hither and thither.

I seized the spare oar, and applied myself to aid my companion. He took it from my grasp, and tossed it overboard.

"No, Cathy, if we are saved, you shall owe your salvation to me alone."

For a moment my eyes met his. What did I read there? Why did it give me such a dull pain at my heart? Why did I forget the danger that encompassed me, and strive to analyze that one swift expression?

We were tossed wildly onward. A wave mightier than the others arose. I saw it coming, and recognized our probable destruction.

Burke threw the oar away, and flung his arms around me.

"Cathy," he said hoarsely, "if we are lost, I want you to remember, when we meet in the other world, that *here* I loved you!"

It was upon us, cold as ice, insatiable as the grave! It bore us down, down through interminable depths, but still he kept his hold on me. We rose at last, and then I felt the mighty efforts Burke Sealiff was making to save me.

It seemed years,—but it was only a few moments. We reached the shore, and he lifted me above the reach of the tide, high up on the rocks.

"Cathy," he said, "I had not thought to speak so soon. I had intended to do something worth your favor before I asked it. But we have been so very near death, I can no longer keep silent. I love you, Cathy,—I want your love in return."

"Burke,—my dear brother!"

I was surprised beyond myself; and, for all it is so sweet to be loved, his words inexpressibly distressed me.

"Never call me that name again!" he burst forth passionately. "I must be ail, or nothing. Cathy, tomorrow I sail on a long voyage as mate of the 'Alhambra'—"

"Burke, are you speaking truth?"

"Certainly! I have foolishly refrained from mentioning it to you: but I weary of this eventless life; and, Cathy, dear, I have so longed to do some great, brave deed that would make me more worthy to ask your love."

The thought of his going away filled me with profound dread. What I feared for him I could not have told; but I did fear, and I grew cold and trembling, with his arms around.

We always value most those things we are



about to lose, and hold lightly what we are sure of keeping.

"Cathy, make me happy. Let me go away into the temptations that befall me fortified by your love. Will you?"

I thought it over like one dreaming. I had no other attachment, I owed something to the Sealiffs for their kind care of me during all my years of helplessness, — yes, I thought I liked Burke. Of love I knew nothing. He was dear to me as any other. At least I tried hard to think so.

With his pleading eyes on my face, I could not refuse him. So I said, —

"Yes, Burke, I think I can love you."

I believe he was not entirely satisfied with my reply; but he kissed me tenderly, and called me his darling. I should make life so bright and beautiful to him. He should look into the future with such hopeful eyes.

Ah! did he feel within his heart of hearts that there were depths in my nature as yet untouched, — secret chambers, where his footsteps would never echo?

Well, the next day he sailed. I stood on the cliffs, and watched his ship until it became a mere speck of snow upon the waters.

I turned away before it disappeared on the horizon. I think I have a touch of that weird superstition which reckons it bodes evil to watch a loved one out of sight.

As I hurried down the steep path to the cottage of my foster parents, a little packet was put into my hand by a stranger.

I opened it, and found — only the knot of blonde ribbon I had given Rex Hollingford five months before.

He had summoned me.

What could I do, — what excuse offer the Sealiffs for going to the Rookery?

I could not stoop to falsehood or deception, so I told them plainly that I was wanted by the master of the Rookery, — he who had been so kind to me.

They imperfectly comprehended, — they were honest, simple, only, — and put forth no impediment.

I could not be regardless of this summons. I never thought of disobeying it. Something intangible hurried me on. Was it Fate, — or Destiny? Who knows?

The Hollingford carriage had come for me. I took only a change of clothing in a basket, and set out. The journey occupied two days, and I reached the Rookery at nightfall.

Mr. Hollingford met me at the door, and, without a word of welcome, led me into the green sitting-room. Involuntarily, I glanced at the veiled picture. Veiled no longer now; the covering was removed, and the red firelight tinged the hair with gleams of gold, and a strange semblance of life into the mystical eyes.

When I had finished looking at it, I turned to speak to Mr. Hollingford; but he had vanished.

Tea was brought in. The old butler waited on me, but I took the meal alone.

After the cloth was removed, Mr. Hollingford returned.

"Miss Merle," he said, "come up-stairs, if you please. I have something to show you."

I followed him silently up two flights of stairs, down the right-hand passage, and then he halted before the door of that chamber of mystery whose shadows I had once penetrated.

"You are not nervous, Miss Merle? You are not easily moved?" he said inquiringly.

"No."

We passed through the first room. A strange, indescribable awe stole over me. I almost glanced back over my shoulder to see what shape might be following me. That dull, torpid air was full of mysterious suggestions.

The second door creaked loudly as it gave us admittance to the inner chamber, and closed behind us with an almost human shriek. The room was faintly lighted with a wax candle standing on the marble top of the dressing-bureau. The curtains of the bed were drawn. A faint odor of dead flowers filled the air.

Mr. Hollingford took my unresisting hand in his, and led me to the bedside; his touch was like ice. I looked at his face: it was strong and inscrutable.

He drew aside the curtains, and I saw — the face of a corpse!

The most gifted of Italy's sculptors, in his fairest creation, would have confessed himself powerless in conception before the perfectness of that dead woman's face. I have seen many called beautiful, but nothing so faultlessly peerless as that.

She might, perhaps, have reckoned twenty-five years; but they had touched her only with blossoming, and if she had ever known pain or sorrow, death had obliterated all traces.

Her hair lay over the pillow, — a wildness of rippling gold. The arch of her clear forehead, the delicate tracery of her brows, the long, curving lashes lying so fearlessly on her cheek, the sweet, mute lips, — O Heaven! must all this more than earthly loveliness be given to the grave?

Mr. Hollingford looked at me with a half-pitying, half-contemptuous expression on his pale face.

"You think her beautiful? Even in death her presence thrills you?"

"As nothing living has ever done."

"And what, think you, was she when her eyes were lit with life, and her lips were crimson with the heat of youth and love? What, think you, must she have been to the man who loved her?"

"More than his life! More than heaven itself!"

"True; and therein lay her power for evil. Wherever we make an idol, it shall crumble in our hands. God has spoken it."

He remained silent a moment, dropped the curtains, and led me to a seat. I did not know whether he would say more; but he went on directly.

"Her name was Constance Lynde. Constance! they say it signifies faithfulness, — but never was a name more fearfully misapplied. Catharine, that beautiful clay lying there was animated by as false a heart as ever beat; and those lips have lured more men to destruction than you have ever touched hands with."

"Impossible!"

"Be quiet, and listen to me. I will tell you her story, and mine."

"Not if it will give you pain" —

"Humph! as if pain were new enough to me to be a sensation. Miss Merle, I have had so much of what men call suffering that I laugh at the pang. Be patient. It is no brief history that I have to relate, and I must tell it in my own way."

"My father died three years after the birth of Gerald and I, — for we were twin brothers. You have seen Gerald's picture in the room below, taken when he was twenty-four. It is very like him. We had no sister. My mother's greatest grief was not being mother to a girl. When we were five years of age, there came a German beggar-woman to the Rookery, asking charity. She had with her a little girl scarce a year old. My mother took her in, was kind to her, and let her die beneath our roof. The

little girl, she said, before she died, was named Constance Argemorne Lynde; but how she became possessed of her, she refused to reveal. She gave her to my mother, on dying, and the trust was accepted with eager joy. Oh, what a wealth of love was lavished on that-child! At one time, I think my mother fairly worshiped her. The Hollingfords do not love lightly when once they yield to passion. Constance grew up with us, and as we came to youth we both loved her. The Rookery belonged to me, as the eldest. Could that have influenced her in her choice? Then, I would have struck dead the man who had dared make the insinuation: now, I know that I was favored because I was the heir.

"When she was thirteen, we were betrothed. I was going to India for a few years with an uncle, to assist in the complications of his vast mercantile business, and to see something of the world. She kissed me when I went, and swore to be faithful unto death. I loved her, and I believed her."

"Three years is a long time to wait. There was some secret influence within me pleading for her when I would have scorned her for giving herself to Gerald during my absence. He had won her from me. He worshiped her! He would have lost kingdoms for one of her smiles. The touch of her hand made him pale and flush, and when she let her eyes rest upon him for a moment, I could see the rich blood leap like fire across his white forehead. This infatuation was something fearful to behold."

"I had thought I loved Constance, but when I found her untrue my heart grew cold. Mine is a nature which knows no variability. I could better forgive sin than change. She had stepped from the high pedestal on which I had placed her, and walked in the filth of inconstancy. But I loved with strange tenderness her memory, — the memory of what I had fancied her. I believe we all love the *ideal* more than the *real*. We value people more for those qualities we *think* they possess than for what they really are."

"For my mother's sake, I put all bitterness out of my heart, and gave them my blessing. My mother strongly opposed the arrangement. It was the first time she had doubted Constance, — the first glimpse she had obtained of her true nature. I did not stop to see them married. I went to Eng-

land, and at the end of a year I was recalled home by a strange, incoherent letter from my mother. Home,—but to what a scene of desolation! I found my mother dying, and Gerald—Catherine, my brother—was sleeping, under the oaks out yonder, the sleep of death; murdered! I can call it by no other name. To speak intelligibly: Two months after the marriage had taken place, Constance showed herself as she was to my infatuated brother. She did not love him. She cared only for herself, and her own selfish pleasures. Fond of adoration, she gathered around her a host of gay admirers, and the Rookery became a scene of riot and nightly revelry.

Between her desperate flirtations and her capricious coldness, she drove my brother nearly frantic. When her baby was born, ten months after her marriage, Gerald hoped for a change for the better. But it did not come. The care of the child irked her, and for days together she left it entirely to the nurse. God was merciful, and took it out of the world before it was ten weeks old.

“Just after the death of her child, Constance consummated her folly. She eloped with a French adventurer,—a wild young fellow, with only his handsome face to recommend him. Imagine, if you can, what a scandal this was,—what a black shadow on the unstained honor of the Hollingford family. We have all been proud and haughty,—it runs in the blood,—but for this shame the family honor was covered in dust and ashes.

“Gerald’s hot blood was fired. He followed the guilty couple; but Constance took refuge in a house of doubtful reputation, and her husband would not follow her thither. De Villier, her paramour, he met by accident. A few fierce words passed between them, and then, at a brutal taunt on his wife’s shame, Gerald lost his self-control, and struck the vile seducer to the floor. De Villiers soon recovered, and, springing to his feet, before my brother divined his intention, he drew a pistol, and shot the man he had so foully injured through the brain.

“The murderer escaped, and they brought the dead body of Gerald home to my mother. She was never herself again afterward. She died two weeks after my return home, and I was left to my wild plan of revenge. Vengeance on Eugene De Villier I swore to

have, if my whole life was spent in its accomplishment. Heaven took the matter out of my hands. He was killed in a pot-house brawl before I could put the clutches of the law upon him. Looking back now, I am glad that it was so.

“Left to myself, I grew morose and sullen. I said all women were false. I shunned them. I shut up the Rookery, and went abroad. I had been home from the wilds of Asia only a few weeks when you were thrown upon my hospitality. A sorry hospitality you found it.

“Three weeks ago, Constance came here. She was dying. I saw death in her face. She craved one little boon: the privilege of dying beneath my roof, in her own room,—the room which had been hers in her sinless girlhood. Catherine, a thousand demons were at work within me, urging me to cast her off, to refuse her petition; but I remembered her as she was years and years ago, when I had carried her over the rough places in the chestnut woods in my arms, and my heart softened. I let her remain. Two days ago she died. The name of Gerald was the last word on her lips. Perhaps she loved him, after all.”

Mr. Hollingford stopped, and turned toward me. He rose instantly.

“You are feeling the effect of this close air. Pardon me for keeping you so long. Let us go. Come out of the gloom.”

He took me down to the sitting-room, where a cheerful fire was burning.

“See,” he said, pointing to the picture. “I have removed the veil now. I could not bear to look on his face while she lived.”

He stood a moment before the picture, touched his lips to the canvas, then came and leaned over my chair.

“Catherine,” he said, in a strangely altered tone, “can you imagine why I sent for you?”

“No.”

“Can you imagine why you came?”

“Because—because some unexplained power compelled me.”

“I can answer both questions to the point. I sent for you because I loved you, and you came because you loved me.”

His words pierced me like a sword. In a moment I saw my own heart, and I shrank from the contemplation. I grew as cold as ice.

“Rex Hollingford, I am the promised wife of another man.”

He caught my hands fiercely in his.

"But you do not love him! Catharine, how could you perjure yourself?"

"God help me!" I cried faintly.

He smiled.

"I defy the whole world to take from me the woman I love,—the woman who loves me! You will never be this man's wife,—never!"

I rose to my feet. My old cool pride came back to me.

"Be quiet, sir! My word is passed. I shall marry Burke Sealiff when he returns. Accept your fate,—you will not have to suffer what will fall to my lot."

He pressed my hands, and led me to the door.

"Go up to your room, Catherine," he said, in a quiet tone. "Tomorrow I will send you home."

He did so. We parted without a single private word. He went back to his gloom and loneliness, and I returned to hold communion with the winds and the waters.

The long, long year that followed I wish I might forget. It was full of praying and secret conflicts and unshed tears. Did God listen to my wild entreaties, and strike a life out of existence to answer them? Eternity shall reveal!

We had letters from Burke. His ship was homeward-bound; might look for him the middle of October. Whole days I spent out on the cliffs, watching for a sail.

The line storm set in with unprecedented violence. The wind was high, and the sea rough. The old fishermen shook their heads. Jack Sealiff was anxious for his son; and I—why was not I agonized for my lover?

All day long the third day of the storm I

stood on the cliffs. I saw a sail at last. Now it appeared,—now it was lost to view in the whirling clouds of spume drift.

I got upon my knees; but I could not pray,—my lips were dumb.

It drifted in,—that doomed ship. O Heaven! could not those on board see their danger? They neared the point which must be rounded before they made the harbor.

I held my breath. The great vessel shivered, careened. Another moment, and she was upon the rocks. I shut my eyes, and when at last I opened them, a few broken timbers floating in on the waves was all that remained of the once noble ship.

Like one in a dream, I went down to the point, and sat down on the wet sands, waiting for Burke to come to me. I felt that he would.

It grew dark. Scores of bodies had been cast up, but not yet the one I waited for. Kind hearts tried to force me away from the place,—but they talked to stone.

A great wave brought him to me, at last,—his golden hair clinging about his marble face, his blue eyes wide open to meet the love and tenderness of his betrothed wife. I took the cold hand to my bosom, put my lips to his, and all outward things faded away.

For weeks I lay on a bed of sickness, and when I did at last rise again to life and consciousness, the snows of winter slept heavily on Burke Sealiff's grave.

In March, Rex Hollingford came to me. I was out on the cliffs when he came. He sought me there, took me into his arms, and held me silently.

I understood him.

In April we were married, and the Rookery is my earthly Paradise.

## THE VOYAGE OF THE SHAKERS.

BY W. H. MACY.

Dave Dunn generally had a stock of yarns ready for any and all occasions, and one hearing him would say that his stories were either strictly true, or very cleverly extemporized. But from cultivating his acquaintance during a long cruise which we made as shipmates, I came to suspect that he invented most of his yarns in his idle hours, and spent some care in elaborating the incidents, and fixing them in his memory ready to be made use of as occasion might require. I had been reading Montgomery's poem, "The Voyage of the Blind," and was making some comment upon that sad story to Dunn, when he said carelessly:—

"Yes, I remember reading about that voyage, and it was indeed a very strange yarn,—so strange that I did n't believe it, though it is rather a good thing to write poetry upon. By the way, I have never told you, I think, about the voyage of the Shakers."

"The Shakers!" I said, in amazement. "No, indeed! I have some knowledge of these peculiar people, for I once made a visit to their community at New Lebanon; but I never heard that any of them were seafaring men."

"Nor I either," answered Dave, laughing at the droll idea of any sailor having embraced the doctrines of Mother Ann Lee. The Shakers that I refer to did n't come from New Lebanon at all, but formed a very odd community by themselves. They did n't shake as a matter of religious duty, either; for it was rather a case of 'needs must when the Devil drives.'"

"Well, give us the yarn," said I, for I had got just enough now to excite my curiosity.

"We were homeward bound on the 'Cadmus,'" he began, "from an Indian-Ocean voyage, and had arrived nearly abreast of the Cape of Good Hope, when one morning a sail was in sight, ahead, steering on the same course as ourselves. As we had the advantage of her in point of speed, we gradually overhauled her, so that in the afternoon we were right abeam of her, within a

couple of miles, and our curiosity was greatly roused by what we observed. We could see that she was a small brig, apparently a dull sailor at best, but was now under easy canvas, having her topgallant sails both furled after a fashion, but in so slovenly a manner that we thought at first they were hanging clewed up. She yawed about in a strange manner, as if the man at the helm was either drunk or asleep. She did not appear to be at all under proper management and trim to encounter the bad weather which might reasonably be expected in doubling Good Hope. As the wind was dying away when we came up abeam of her, the captain signified his intention of lowering a boat, and boarding her. As we were preparing to do so, he looked through his telescope, and saw the brig's signal going up; not steady, but by jerks, until it reached the gaff-end, when it stopped,—there being just wind enough to open and flutter it.

"The British ensign,—and set union down!" said the captain, with some excitement. "Some poor fellow in distress. Lower away, and jump in there, a full crew! I'll board her myself."

"Handing his spy-glass to the steward, he leaped into the stern-sheets, and took the steering-oar in his own hands. We needed no urging, but were soon pulling away with all our might and muscle toward the strangers.

"I was pulling the midship oar in the captain's boat, and, as we were near enough to make out the brig's name on her counter-board, I turned my head, and read, 'Shakspere, of Liverpool.' I saw a man looking over the taffrail who appeared to be gesticulating in a wild sort of way. Our captain, standing up, and facing forward, could see more, of course, and his face wore a very puzzled look.

"She's an English vessel," he said, "but the crew must be either fools or Frenchmen, the way they are jerking themselves about decks. Pull ahead, boys; a few more strokes, and we shall be alongside. They might be amusing themselves with a pantomime,—or perhaps they are all mad actors,

inspired from the name of their old vessel."

"As he spoke, we shot alongside, under the lee of the brig, and he clambered over her low rail to the deck, followed in a hurry by all the rest of us. But as one after another struck the deck with his feet, each remained rooted to the spot, staring in blank amazement at our hosts. There were only seven men to be seen; but this was quite enough to man the small vessel on a merchant voyage. But they were all acting in the same strange manner, which I can only describe as a compromise between a drunken swagger and epileptic fits. But no one had spoken to welcome us, when Captain Winters broke silence.

"Hollo! what's the matter with ye all?" he cried, 'Captain,'—addressing the one whom he had instinctively selected as occupying that station,—'what's the misfortune? and what can we do to help you? A signal of distress is always enough to make all brother sailors the same as shipmates. My name is Winters, and yonder is my ship, the "Cadmus," of Sag Harbor. Why, what the —— is the matter with your men? Hold up, there! For the strange captain, making an effort to step forward, and extend his hand, jerked and twitched with such violence that threatened to tear him limb from limb.

"I now observed that all the rest of these unfortunate men kept as much as possible in one position, each clinging to something firm, as if they feared to rush out into open space. The skipper made several efforts to speak, but his words were so broken up into odd syllables, and the effort to speak caused such an increase of his spasms, that he was soon obliged to stop it, and suffer himself to run down like a clock. No mortal ear or intellect could so connect these jerks of sound as to make intelligible English of them. We addressed all the men in turn, but their efforts to talk were no more successful,—most of them declining to try, and merely giving negative movements of the head, which resulted in a continuous vibratory action of that organ. This motion lasted some time, the arc growing shorter and shorter until it again became settled, while the body shook as with an ague fit.

"The negro who pulled the stroke oar of our boat had been left in her, to keep her off from the brig's side; but he now came

and joined the group, having veered the boat astern, where she would ride clear. He was a Zanzibar native, but spoke English indifferently well. He examined the men with the air of one who knew what he was about, and to whom the sight was not quite so great a mystery as to the rest of us.

"I understand it," said Ebony,—for this was the name he went by among his shipmates. 'I know what's the matter,'—showing his white teeth,—'they's all got the shakes, sir.'

"The what?" demanded Captain Winters.

"The shakes, sir."

"We can all see that, of course, for they seem to be in danger of shaking themselves all to pieces. But what is the meaning of it all?"

"I spects the brig has been into Njerxi Bay," announced Ebony.

"Is that so?"

"All the faces of the stricken men lighted up, and they all began throwing affirmative words at us, at the imminent risk, as it seemed, of dislocating their necks, and slating their heads off their shoulders.

"Njerxi Bay, eh?" said Captain Winters. 'It's well named, anyhow; but I should suppose they had discovered perpetual motion while there. But what's the disease? and what can be done to cure or help it?'

"Ebony went on to explain that the shakes was a disease peculiar to a certain locality on the east coast of Africa, and that he had in the course of his life seen a few cases of it. Njerxi Bay was the place most famous for it, and very few vessels ever went in there, for the shakes was almost sure to seize upon every white man who ventured on shore, especially if he staid out in the night air.

"The 'Shakspeare,' having had a long passage across from Ceylon, had put in at the ill-fated bay for water, which was easily obtained there, though the permanent population of blacks at this pestilential place was very small. The brig had remained there only two days, but for the sake of despatch all hands had staid ashore, and filled water-casks late in the evening. The disease does not appear until they have been four days at sea, and, as it was useless to put back for relief to any harbor on the east coast, they had kept on their course as best they could to double the Cape of Good Hope; but one after another had been

senized with the fatal shakes, and had continued to grow worse. All this we learned by the statements of Ebony, and by his leading questions drawing confirmatory nods and gestures from the captain and crew of the 'Shakspeare.'

"They had managed to furl their topgallant sails while a part of them were able to go aloft, and had kept them furled. There had as yet been no weather heavy enough to compel them to take in any more sail, but the most they could have done if a blow came on would have been to let their topsails run down on the caps, and Spanish-reef them by hauling out the reef-tackles. They were nearly helpless in respect to steering the vessel; and in consequence she jerked herself about almost as badly as the helmsman himself did. Any observations for latitude or longitude were quite out of their power. A quadrant in the captain's hands would have swept the whole vault of the heavens from horizon to zenith.

"'Here 's a pretty kettle of fish!' said Captain Winters; 'and I don't know what to do to help the poor fellows. Is there any cure for this shakes, Ebony? This certainly knocks my experience either afloat or ashore. I have had some pretty bad cases of delirium tremens, and I once saw a man dosed with strychnine for paralysis until his limbs jerked fearfully of their own accord. But it was mere nothing compared to this sight.'

"'I don't know, sir,' answered Ebony, 'whether the shakes can ever be cured after it has been left to run so long. The only cure for it is putting the man in soak in cold water up to his chin for two or three hours at a time, and chucking him under, head and ears, as often as he can bear it. That never fails to fix it, if it is begun in good time, when the shakes first comes on. But I never saw anything like this. These men have been shaking from ten days to a fortnight; and I 'm afraid, sir, that it has got fairly *set* upon them for good.'

"'How long do you think they can live in this way?'

"'Live, sir? Oh, they 'll live as long as anybody else, for that matter. A man that has the shakes is n't sick, sir, and their minds is all clear; but he warbbles and yanks about so that he isn't fit to take care of himself, sir.'

"'But how do they ever get any sleep?' asked the captain.

"'Sleep, sir? They sleeps regular, just like a well man, and can eat their rations right along.'

"'A very strange kind of disease, indeed,' said the captain, 'if you can call it a disease at all. But we can never leave these poor victims to make the voyage round Good Hope in this condition. There would be anything but good hope of their ever reaching any port but Neptune's locker. We must put help aboard of her, and keep company as far as Cape Town or St. Helena.'

"'As the 'Cadmus' was now nearly calmed, within half a mile of the brig, the arrangements were soon made. I was one of the six men sent on board, Mr. Archer, our chief mate, being placed in charge, with instructions to keep company with the ship so far as possible, but if separated to make the best of our way to one of the two ports mentioned. Our captain brought up the whole stock of quinine from the medicine-chest to put on board the 'Shakspeare;' but Ebony, who was of course to be one of the boat's crew, only laughed when he saw it.

"'That stuff is no use, sir,' he said; 'you might just as well keep it as to send it.'

"'Why, that 's what is always used for fever and ague.'

"'Ay, sir, but this is quite a different thing from the shakes; it 's neither fever nor ague. If it 's cured at all, it will be by soaking it out of 'em, sir.'

"'So away we went on board, and at once proceeded to loose the canvas, which had been clumsily furled, and to trim all sail for the light wind. We then went to work to saw the empty water-casks in two, and soon had large tubs enough made to afford one for each patient.

"'Mr. Archer was a man so gifted with a propensity to see the ludicrous side of everything that after the first shock of the scene was over he could do little but laugh.

"'If there is a patron saint overlooking this vessel,' said he, 'it must be Saint Vitus, or old Daniel Dancer, the miser. I say, Ebony, this complaint is n't catching, is it? Bear a hand, now, and get all these bath-tubs filled with water, so we can begin operations tonight. When we are ready, I shall pipe all hands to baptism.'

"'The poor fellows looked on, and shook harder than ever, while all these preparations were being made. But when we came to strip them for the bath they were all in-

clined to resist, and their paroxysms became positively frightful.

"It won't do; we can never put them into the water," said the mate, moved to pity by this apparent increase of suffering. "Ebony, it will never do."

"Oh it's the way they always does, sir," returned the black, as coolly as if he were about to put a tub of clothes in soak, instead of seven human beings. "There's no other chance for 'em, sir, and the earlier we get about it the better, too."

"Under his directions, they were all put by main force in the water, when it actually seemed that every man would jerk himself limb from limb; and we were obliged to hold them there, and witness their sufferings,—feeling our duty a very painful one. No good effect was perceptible that day nor the next, when the 'Cadmus,' at sundown, ran within hail, and spoke us, that we might report progress.

"We could say nothing encouraging, but our black doctor still held steadfast in his faith that plenty of water was their only chance, and we must keep on with this rough treatment, giving them two or three hours a day in the tubs. We had prepared strong coverings of canvas, with a hole large enough for a man's head to pop up through it, while his shoulders were confined by it.

"While the poor victims were writhing and shivering to that degree that their sufferings seemed enough to move a heart of stone, and scarcely any one but Ebony himself could bear to look upon them, that relentless negro would coolly go the rounds of his hospital, as he termed it, and from time to time chuck the heads of one or another down through the canvas so as to shove him under, head and ears.

"He vowed that if they did not take the medicine freely, of their own will, he must make them take it; that it was all for their own good, if they only knew it, and that he would keep them in soak day and night all the way into Cape Town but he would give the thing a thorough trial.

"There was no fear of his stock of medicine giving out, as he had the whole Indian Ocean to draw upon, and could get it fresh every day. It was in vain that we urged our fears of killing the poor men: he argued—and reasonably, too—that they might as well die as to live in the condition they then were. This was quite true, though not ex-

actly a way in which white men and Christians are accustomed to look at such matters.

"On the fourth day, when we were forcing the patients along to their ablutions, Mr. Archer had more than half a mind to exercise his authority, and put a stop to what he regarded as sheer cruelty. We had lost sight of the ship during the previous night, and he could no longer get instructions from his superior.

"Here's Eb'ny," said he, 'has shipped himself a doctor, and I suppose it's according to rule to follow the doctor's directions; but the poor fellows can't stand it much longer,—they look already as if they had been parboiled.'

"No danger, sir," answered Ebony, with the utmost coolness. "Don't you see they all sleep well enough, and eat their regular allowance? They would n't do that if they were in any danger."

"Ebony was right; there was no danger, and the good effect of his savage mode of treatment was soon plain enough, for within half an hour after the patients had been set in the cold bath, one of them, after a convulsive fit of more than usual violence, suddenly became entirely quiet, and then, stretching up his neck as far as possible, spoke in a perfectly clear and natural, but weak, voice.

"Let me out of this, for Heaven's sake, before I freeze!"

"All right!" roared our black triumphantly; 'what did I tell ye? Help him out, quick! We've soaked it all out of him, and we must keep on with the others in the same way.'

"The restored man was soon able to give us all the particulars of their cruise up to the time when we boarded them. His name was Bateman, and he had filled the position of mate on board the 'Shakspeare.' Before the day's bath was over, another man's muscles relaxed, and he too was taken out of the tub completely cured. In these cases there was no convalescent stage, no gradual abatement of the symptoms, but when the shaking and jerking ceased, the man was himself again. But the other men required longer treatment, and the case of the captain was the most stubborn of all.

"But as all the men, though unable to talk, were perfectly rational in mind, the recovery of the first ones put new spirit into the rest, and they took the medicine with



courage and hope. We no longer had any fear that they would die in their tubs, nor had we any resistance to contend with on their part.

"But the shakes held on to the captain so long, and his paroxysms were so severe, that Ebony himself became dubious, and was almost ready to give him up as a hopeless case. But as this was the only chance for his salvation, and his system appeared to receive no injury from the many immersions, he persevered. Meanwhile, we had come within the influence of the severe weather which we had reason to expect off the old Cape of Storms, and for several days were obliged to lie to, and drift in a heavy gale, or rather a succession of gales, with short intervals of better weather. We had seen no more of the 'Cadmus' since parting company, but having now a very strong crew were quite competent to manage the brig under any circumstances.

"Twelve days had gone by since we commenced our operations, and still the English captain was as spasmodic as ever,—showing no change at all. He had been helped into his bath-tub, as usual, which was lashed under the lee of the mainmast,—for the brig was laboring heavily in a very turbulent sea,—and Ebony had taken the precaution to make a bow-line in one end of a rope, and slip it up round the patient's body under the arms, knowing how helpless he would be to assist himself in case of any accident.

"The gale had died away, and the brig fell off several points from the wind, rolling so that one could hardly keep his feet, then coming to with a sudden luff, she met a very heavy sea, which came tumbling in upon her weather-bow as if it would engulf her completely. The danger was seen and felt in time for each one to cling to something, for we were all assembled aft at the time; but the negro doctor, having enough to do to save himself, had for an instant left the bather to take his chance. The whole main deck was flooded with water as the vessel buried herself, and when, drenched and frightened, we gained our senses, and looked about us, the tub was gone from its lashings, and the poor, trembling form of Captain Durham was seen drifting away to leeward on a wave! His frantic struggles were fearful to behold, and brought a cry of horror from all of us.

"The rope! the rope!" cried Ebony in

great excitement. 'Lay hold here, and haul in!'

"Luckily he had used one end of a long coil in making the bow-line, and it had not yet all run out. We seized the rope with eager hands, and, exerting all our strength, dragged the poor man on board, but not until he had been several times overwhelmed. There was no drowning a man who had the shakes on him, however. Ebony said such a thing was impossible; and I believe he told the truth.

"The poor captain was not drowned, but he was cured. The shakes were completely shaken out of him, and he landed on deck a well man, and quite competent to assume the command of his brig. No further damage had been done than the loss of the tub, which was no loss at all, as we had no further use for it."

"Well, what then?" I asked,—for Dave had stopped abruptly.

"Why, that's all I can tell you about it of my own knowledge, when the gale blew out, and a few days afterward we met the 'Cadmus' at the rendezvous off Table Bay, and went back to our own ship. But I afterward heard that as soon as the 'Shakespeare' arrived at St. Helena, each man of her crew, as soon as he drank a glass of liquor, was again seized with the shakes, and had it as bad as ever. There was not a drop on board at the time we boarded her, for the men had drank it all in the first attacks of disease, hoping to get relief from it. Ebony declared this was the most fatal medicine they could have taken, and that this was the reason they had required such long immersions to soak the liquor out."

"What nonsense!" said I.

"So I thought," returned Dave calmly; "but I must allow the darcy to know more about that disease than I do."

"Do you believe that the men were in that condition merely from delirium tremens?"

"Not at all. The disease—which, as I understand it, is peculiar to Njerxi Bay—was no delirium, for, as I told you before, the brain is perfectly healthy all the time. But it is aggravated by any kind of ardent liquor; and they say that if it is latent in the system the spasmodic action will be roused and excited by drinking even a single glass. We heard that all her crew were discharged at St. Helena, and sent to a hospital, except the mate. He was a total-ab-

stinence man, — and that accounts for his having been cured quicker than the others.”

“But Captain Durham’s case, you said, was the toughest of all.”

“Of course it was, — because he was the hardest drinker. I heard that he died there in the hospital, shaking so that he had to be held down in his bed.”

“And did they succeed in *shaking out* the others?”

“I don’t know, for I never heard the particulars. But I’m afraid they never tried it very thoroughly, for no doctor, or any one

else not acquainted with such cases, would ever believe in it as Ebony did, and continue it so long, seemingly against all hope. I never could learn the fate of each particular man of the crew, — but I *do* know that the vessel was taken charge of by the authorities, and sent home to Liverpool. What I have told you as coming under my own observation, while I was on board of her, is strictly true.”

I did not intimate any doubt of his word, nor could I say that the story was no *great shakes*, though I really thought so.

## THE WELL IN THE ROCK.

BY MRS. R. B. EDSON.

THE last Sabbath in May, and a day unusually lovely for even that delightful season. The spring was very early, and the broad belt of sycamores that enclosed the meeting-house "green" were already in leaf. The orchards were white as milk; and, through the grassy lanes and over the breezy uplands, came the faint scent of apple-blossoms. The cool country roads were fragrant with sweet pepper-bush and dewy fresh-smelling ferns.

Coming in from every direction, were groups of people, with long solemn faces, set steadfastly Zion-ward. Over the long bridge from Cedar Run, and down the Rocky-hill road, came quaint odd-looking vehicles—high, "bellows-top" chaises, rickety asthmatic carryalls, and rude farm-wagons, with boards laid across for seats, with occasionally a chair for some ancient grandame; and some few, holding fast the customs of their fathers, came on horseback, the "gude-wife" mounted behind on a "pillion." One after another, they climbed the long gravelly hill, leading to the one meeting-house in Milverton.

The church itself was a square boxlike-looking building, originally painted a dull brick-red, but worn and faded until it was of no particular color. The location, however, was magnificent—situated on the brow of a long sloping hill, at whose foot ran a sluggish river, brightened just now with clusters of great creamy water-lilies, slowly lifting their snowy lids to the sun. Stretching away to left and right, was one of the loveliest of New England landscapes. Dense-wooded hills, looking like great emerald cones; broad even meadows, smooth and soft as velvet; a quiet dreamy river, winding in pretty graceful curves—never hurrying, never fretting, but gleaming like a silver scarf across the fair shoulders of the young May. And, threaded in, and overshooting through it all, were pretty white cottages, and great comfortable-looking farm-houses, with flocks of milk-white sheep browsing in the pastures, and the tinkle of the cowbell coming up faintly through the cool copses.

In the rear of the church, and falling off

toward a thick growth of underbrush, beyond which gloomed a lonesome hemlock swamp, was the Milverton burying-ground. It was dreary and bleak, and half overgrown with sumach and sweet-fern. But still, with a love as tender, and a grief as deep as yours or mine, they had laid away, one after another, their dearest treasures, in this desolate spot.

John Braddock, coming out of the house, leading his little son, Lee Braddock, by the hand, walked slowly down the swarded path to the road.

The "Braddock Place," as it was called, was a quaint picturesque-looking building, and, with the exception of "Meeting-House Hill," had the finest location in Milverton. The main building was originally a substantial square two-story house; but each successive generation had added wings, gables, porticos *ad infinitum*, until it looked more like some grand feudal castle, than it did like a staid respectable New England farm-house.

John Braddock, the present occupant, was the only surviving son of a large family, and, with his wife and one child—a boy of four years—dwelt alone in the great roomy mansion. One could not help noticing, as he walked down the street, his splendid physique. Rather above the medium height, broad-shouldered and broad-chested, he looked like one born to command. Everything about the man—from the massive forehead, with the flashing violet-gray eyes, to the firm ringing step, bespoke strength, will, determination. And, besides, there was not a handsomer man in Milverton than John Braddock, had it not been for the stern lines about the firm mouth, and an air of chilling hauteur, called dignity by some, although it was not—for true dignity is not chilling, but suave.

One noticed, too, that he rather kept aloof from the little groups talking together. For everywhere—under the tall sycamores, on the church steps, and even in the entry, little knots of people were talking in low excited voices. It was evidently a great day for Milverton. There had not been such a turnout since the "great revival,"

when people came in from twenty, and even thirty miles, to attend the meetings.

But the excitement now was of quite another character. For more than two years, the Milverton parish had been agitating the project of an organ for the church, and this delightful May morning witnessed the consummation of their desires. The parish had been divided into two parties—"progressives" and "conservatives." The "progressives" had triumphed, and were consequently in full feather; but there was not wanting a "glorious minority," who characterized it as an "innovation of the evil one." They did not, however, like their brethren of a later day, fly off on a tangent, and go to "some other meeting;" but, with good old Puritan firmness, resolved that if Satan was to take possession of the Lord's house, he should not do it without a tussle. But the "progressives" had been victorious, and the anti-organs were filled with righteous indignation. They denounced the organ as a "city abomination," and called the organist a son of Belial. For Doctor Fenton—who, by the stricter portion of his brethren, was more than half suspected of heresy—had procured an organist from the city. Deacon Goodspeed said "it was all a device of the devil, for leading astray silly women," it being well known that they favored it.

In the church porch, some bitter things were said, which made one fancy the "old Adam" was not quite put down yet, even in the bosoms of the elect. Nevertheless, it was an earnest resolute band of men and women, that walked solemnly up the uncarpeted aisles, and filed off into the great square pews.

Here and there, a little child had surreptitiously smuggled in a pond-lily, or a tuft of apple-blossoms, only, however, to have them snatched from their unsanctified fingers, and thrust remorselessly out of the window, by their watchful mammas. The good dames thought flowers a terrible desecration of the sanctity of the Lord's house, and would as soon have thought of bringing their spinning-wheels, and setting them before the altar, as a vase of flowers.

The church was a great gloomy-looking place, inside. A broad clumsy gallery ran round three sides, and at the other side—or rather end, was the pulpit—a high square sort of box, with an immense sounding-board at the back.

Parson Trueheart, in his irreproachable broadcloth and spotless neckerchief, looked not unlike the shaft of this curious pedestal. He was a tall bony man, with heavy iron-gray hair, and a closely-shaven chin—it being considered, in those days, the rankest kind of heresy for a minister to wear a full beard.

Parson Trueheart had taken no part in this discussion between the opposing forces in his parish, but it was shrewdly suspected that he favored the progressive wing. Looking in the kindly face, with the smiling blue eyes, as he stood up to read the hymn, one believed it to be so.

There was a little expectant hush after he sat down, and then the full deep tones of the organ rose and swelled through the long galleries, and floated down the broad aisles, filling the dark sombre church with a great glory. Deacon Goodspeed, with his long white hair combed straight behind his ears, and falling over the high collar of his blue broadcloth coat, leaned his head on his cane and groaned in spirit.

Suddenly and unexpectedly, there was a new accession to the ranks of the "progressives." Little Lee Braddock had climbed up on the seat; one little dimpled hand holding fast his catechism, had fallen over the great high-backed pew, the other held away from his face a mass of thick clustering flaxen curls. The blue veins were swollen in the pure white temples, the thin nostrils dilated, the great blue eyes swam in tears, while the breath came and went quickly through the half-parted lips. The little fingers relaxed their hold on the catechism, but he never knew. Many an eye was turned toward John Braddock's pew, and a thrill of awe ran through the congregation at the little rapt unconscious face. Going down the aisle, Deacon Goodspeed and Doctor Fenton jostled against each other.

"Did you see Braddock's boy, deacon? What do you think of the power of music now?" said the doctor.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me," said the deacon, solemnly.

"But don't you approve of singing?"

"If it be with the spirit and the understanding. But I do not approve of turning the sanctuary into a play-house."

"But, deacon," called out another, "the Good Book says, 'Praise the Lord upon the harp and timbrel, make a joyful noise before the Lord.'"

"And David, you remember, deacon, 'danced before the Lord,'" added Doctor Fenton.

"There will always be those who will wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction," said the deacon, as he walked down the church steps.

John Braddock felt vexed and annoyed. He had set his heart upon his boy being a minister, and had taken him to church persistently, ever since he first began to go alone; but this was the first time he had manifested the least interest in the services. His mind was made up, however, that he should be a preacher. Ever since he was first put in his arms, a little soft bundle of laces and flannel, he had dedicated him to this work. And, beside, he was strongly anti-organ. He "hated singing," he said; but all Milverton remembered when he sat in the choir, his pure strong tenor blending harmoniously with Miriam Dean's clear soprano.

John Braddock had had a romance, though perhaps you would not have thought it to look at him. He could not remember the time when he had not worshipped Miriam Dean, and he had made love to her, in his headstrong impetuous manner, before he was well out of pinafores.

At eighteen, Miriam was superb. Her complexion was a clear creamy white, colorless, except the fierce crimson of the lips. She had great liquid black eyes, and coil upon coil of rich purple-black hair. She was as proud and high-spirited as the Braddocks themselves—for the Braddocks had always been proud and a little aristocratic.

John and Miriam had been betrothed almost since infancy, and everybody looked upon the match as a settled thing. But one day, when Miriam was eighteen and John twenty (they were to be married on his twenty-first birthday), there came to Milverton a young man who gave the name of Alfred Blake, and represented himself as the son of a very wealthy man in the Southern States. He stopped at the "White Fawn" Inn, and, having plenty of leisure, and a pleasing address, he soon made the acquaintance of the young people. He had a pale classic face, with an abundance of wavy chestnut hair, and a magnificent beard of the same color. There was something peculiarly fascinating about the man. There was a certain air of repose—of refinement, about him, that was very attractive.

From the first, it was plainly evident that he was very much struck by Miriam Dean's regal beauty. Miriam, who had never been out of Milverton, contrasted this splendid man with the country-bred youths of Milverton—decidedly to the latter's disadvantage. He began to pay her little attentions, and, like most young girls, she was pleased and flattered by his preference. But John Braddock's quick temper fired up at once. He accused Miriam of seeking to attract the stranger's attention; of falseness, of deception, and ended by telling her she was free to marry Blake if she chose. It was a stormy interview, for Miriam was as unyielding and independent as he, and the end of it was a separation, both being too proud to yield, yet each knowing that never in all their lives could another love be to them what this had been.

While Miriam's feelings were yet bitter and aggrieved, Alfred Blake proposed, and she, in a moment of pique, accepted him; and in less than a month from her break with young Braddock, she was married to Alfred Blake.

It was about this time that a great revival sprang up in Milverton, which swept everything before it. People came in droves, and the church was crowded to overflowing; so that they had to prop up the long galleries, and erect stagings at the windows. There were numerous conversions, and among them John Braddock, who was one of the first to come forward and unite with the church. The change in him was radical; from the frank, impulsive, headstrong boy, he became a grave, stern, silent man. He rarely smiled, forsook the companionship of his young friends, and attended persistently to all the various "means of grace." His gravity of demeanor won him golden opinions among his elders, and he was highly extolled for his readiness in renouncing the "pomp and vanities of the world." He was doubtless sincere, and fancied that he had buried the old earthly love fathoms and fathoms deep, never dreaming that this sudden piety was more a morbid outgrowth of the old slumbering passion, than a genuine, unselfish love for God and goodness.

Great was the surprise of the congregation, when, one Sabbath, the banns were read between John Braddock and Hester Grant. If there is any truth in the "law of opposites," then *they* were well-mated, for

surely never were two more unlike. Hester Grant was poor and an orphan, and peculiarly unfitted to bear the brunt of life; and so she married John Braddock, and went to the great house as its mistress. There was no courtship; he asked her very briefly to be his wife, and she as briefly consented. There were none of those little tendernesses and foolish dalliances common among lovers, and Hester settled down to her new life, with a vague sense of lack—an unsatisfactory yearning for—she knew not what. And yet she lived a quiet contented life. She was of that class of women more distinguished for saintly patience and gentleness, than for any great force of character or depth of feeling. She was a pale, fair-haired, blue-eyed woman, who, if one smote her on one cheek, turned the other also. One of the kind, doubtless, whom Paul had in mind, when he said, "*Wives, obey your husbands.*" At any rate, John Braddock was sovereign ruler in his household; his wife would as soon have thought of disputing the "doctrine of decrees," as his will.

And so the years ran on; but John Braddock nor Miriam Blake never sang again in the Milverton choir. Miriam, poor thing, had little heart to sing, for her husband had turned out a worthless adventurer, spending the greater portion of his time in the city, a dissolute, profligate gamester; leaving her to shift for herself and her two little children—Alfred, or Alfie, as he was called, who was, at the time our story opens, five years old, and little Ethel, who was scarcely one. Miriam had only the little cottage her parents left her, and her own slender hands; but she had a brave resolute spirit; yet it was a hard struggle, sometimes, to keep the terrible wolf from the door. Perhaps, looking up at the great mansion on the hill, she sometimes thought of what "might have been." But if she did, no one ever knew—she was too proud to complain.

Matters continued in this way for some nine or ten years. Occasionally, Alfred Blake came home for a few days, but his coming was little help to his wife, he often carrying back more than he brought. But one day word was brought to Miriam that her husband had been stabbed in a gaming-house, and mortally wounded. She left her children alone, and went to him. She came back in one week, bringing his body with her, for burial in the old Milverton churchyard.

Perhaps she mourned his wretched end, but still, I think, with a feeling of relief; for her children were getting old enough to feel their father's degradation. Indeed, Alfie, now a bright active boy of fifteen, was getting to be a great help to her, and she began to look forward brightly to better days.

Alfie was passionately fond of the water. He would spend whole days in his sailboat—a little eggshell of a thing—sailing dreamily up and down the languid river. No one apprehended any danger. There were no strong currents, and Alfie was a perfect master of his little craft, besides being a strong and expert swimmer.

But one gusty October day, he went across the river to "Walnut Hill" a nutting. A sudden squall of wind and hail came up, just as he was starting for home. It struck the boat when it was about half way across, and the little thing went over like a feather. John Braddock saw it from his window, and, without stopping for hat or coat, ran swiftly to the river. Others, too, had seen the boat go over, and quite a crowd lined the banks. But still the boy did not come up. What could it mean—and he such a swimmer?

While they had been talking, and preparing to get a boat underway, John Braddock had plunged into the stream, and was already near the scene of the disaster. Watching him from the shore, they saw him go down, coming up again with the boy in his arms. When he reached the shore, he staggered to his feet, but still held fast to his insensible burden. He would not give him up to any one, but carried him, all wet and dripping as he was, into Parson Trueheart's little sitting-room, and deposited him on the sofa. Then, without stopping to see whether he were living or dead, he turned, and strode hastily from the room.

"He had been taken with sudden cramps," Doctor Fenton said; but he was still very hopeful of saving him. Two or three times he thought he felt the faint flutter of the pulse; but though he wrought long and skillfully, the half-closed lids never lifted, nor the rigid lips gave back a mother's anguished kisses.

It was a cruel blow to Miriam, her heart was so bound up in the boy. How many bright hopes and pleasant anticipations were laid away under the little mound in the bleak desolate churchyard.

Deacon Goodspeed had been some time failing, and before the leaves were all off the trees, another sad procession climbed the long hill, and Deacon Goodspeed "slept with his fathers."

A parish meeting was immediately called to fill the vacancy. John Braddock seemed to be the most fitting man for the office. He was yet a young man, to be sure, but he was stern, and grave, and rigid; and besides, he was *sound*. There had been some slight signs of defection in the church; and a few—among them Doctor Fenton—had admitted that it was possible—not *probable*, but *possible*—that a few—a very few, might eventually get to heaven, who were not of the Milverton church. It was necessary that this fatal heresy be nipped in the bud, and for that purpose they needed a strong man. And so the mantle of Deacon Goodspeed fell on the shoulders of John Braddock.

A few weeks afterward, John Braddock, standing at the door of his mill, saw a woman go in at Mason's, the marble-worker. She was closely veiled, but he knew the lightest flutter of her garments. After she had gone, he stood a moment in thought.

"I will go into Mason's as I go home," he said.

Mr. Mason was busy at his work, but stopped as he approached.

"Mr. Mason, has the parish said anything to you about a monument for Deacon Goodspeed?"

"They have not," he said.

"You seem to have plenty of work. Death has been busy among us."

"Yes. Widow Blake has just been in to see about a stone for her little boy. A sad affair, sir."

"Yes," turning and walking toward the window.

"It will be rather hard for her to make out the money for one—though of course I shouldn't think of charging her full price. She said she had rather go cold and hungry, than not to have it. She is to come to-morrow to decide about it."

Mr. Braddock came back from the window.

"I will call and let you know about the monument, as soon as the parish has decided."

"Thank you. Good-day, deacon."

John Braddock flushed to the temples; it was the first time he had ever been called by his new title, and for a moment a sense of his unworthiness troubled him.

"I'll make a good job out of that," said Mason, rubbing his hands, as he went back to work. "I'll make up on *that*, what I lose on Widow Blake's."

That night, just before sundown, John Braddock rode leisurely out of town, but once beyond the Milverton hills, he lashed his horse to a gallop, and, before nine o'clock, drew rein before one of the most extensive marble-works in H—. He then selected a beautiful little stone, with a cluster of water-lilies—one half-opened bud broken, and falling from the stem. Workmen were called, and "Alfie" was engraved underneath. Shortly after midnight he put it in his wagon, and turned his horse's head towards Milverton.

Miriam Blake, going to place some late asters on Alfie's grave, started back aghast at what seemed to her a miracle. It was a nine-days' wonder in Milverton. Nobody knew how it could have come there, but there it was, certainly—pure and beautiful beyond anything that had ever been seen in the Milverton burying-ground.

John Braddock called the next day, and gave the promised order for the "monument" to Mason. But Miriam Blake did not come again.

In the meantime, our embryo minister, Lee Braddock, was dreaming sweet dreams, and hearing rare music in the voice of the wind sighing through the forests, but making little headway towards his destined vocation. His father superintended his studies, looking always at this one end. He filled his little chamber, in the sunny "south wing," with heavy works on divinity, which the boy—he was but fifteen—tried in vain to understand.

But there were golden hours in Lee's life, when, throwing his books aside, he climbed the breezy "Meeting-House Hill," and waited on the broad stone steps the coming of Almy Fenton; for Doctor Fenton's daughter was organist now in Milverton.

Perhaps Almy Fenton understood Lee better than anybody else ever had. Up in the organ loft, she had watched the quickened pulse-beat, and the fair face paling and flushing with passionate excitement; and sometimes the slender untrained fingers had struck wondrous chords of harmony, which she had never learned.

One day, as she was arranging her music, she noticed Lee nervously fingering a folded paper. There was a sort of suppressed

excitement in his manner, unusual to him.

"What is it, Lee?"

"If you would just please try this, Miss Fenton," he said, blushing painfully.

Almy took the paper, smoothed it out, and ran her practised eye over it. She saw its wonderful beauty at once.

"Did you write this, Lee?"

"Yes; and I have written a great deal more, but I don't know that papa would like it if he knew. He says it distracts my mind from my studies—and I have got to be a minister, you know. Papa has quite set his heart upon it. O dear!" he went on, passionately; "if God meant that I should be a minister—if he foreordained and decreed from all eternity that I *should* be one, why did he fill my whole soul with unutterable longings after every sweet sound in earth or air?"

Almy did not know, so she said:

"What does your father say?"

"O, he says it is my 'unregenerate heart and unsanctified will.' It is not," he went on, earnestly, "that I would not like to be one. I think it is the grandest thing in life to be a minister—a *true* one; but I think it ought to stand before anything else—the one wish, purpose and desire of the heart. I wish to please papa, and I try hard to understand those great books he brings me, but the letters all run together before my eyes, and go singing away in just the strangest manner! And the other day," he added, drawing near her, and taking hold of a fold of her dress, "I was reading a volume of Doctor Edwards's sermons, which papa particularly wished me to. I read a page over and over, two or three times, trying hard to understand it, when all at once I saw a bar of music lying across the leaf. I never saw anything plainer in my life—all the stops, and quavers, and semi-quavers. I put down my hand to brush it off, it was gone, and though I searched the floor, I could find nothing."

Almy, looking down into the pale spiritual face of the boy, felt a strange sense of awe stealing over her. She took the music he had given her, put it on the rack, and ran her fingers over the keys. It was a strange weird blending of sublimity and pathos. It rose and swelled through the great empty church, filling it with a sudden glory. It died away in plaintive sweetness in the dim aisles, and woke strange whispering voices

in the shadowy silence. It required all of Almy's skill; but she accomplished it. There were tears in her eyes, as the last note died away, and she drew a long tremulous breath.

"Have you ever shown this to any one?" she asked.

A bright flush stained the white forehead.

"Only to Ethel Blake. I just hummed it to her, up by Alfie's grave."

"What did she say about it?"

The boy hesitated, looking down in confusion.

"Well?"

"She said it was beautiful; but then she doesn't know about music as you do, Miss Fenton."

"Well, Lee, I think it is beautiful, too. I think God has given you a rare gift. I think he meant you for a priest of sweet sounds."

"O Miss Fenton! Do you really?" a happy light breaking over his face.

"I do certainly. But, Lee, remember you are no less accountable to him for this gift, than if you were a priest at the altar."

"O, it's not *that*, Miss Fenton. I don't wish to be free from accountability. But I do think I could praise God a great deal better than I could preach about him."

"Father," said Almy Fenton, that night, "I have found a genius to-day."

"Not in Milverton?"

"Yes—in Milverton."

"Who might the marvel be?"

"Lee Braddock. He brought a piece of music to me to-day, which he wrote. It was grand—one of the most exquisite things I ever heard. I never had anything move me so deeply in my life."

"I knew the boy had a great passion for music."

"It is something more than a passion, father—it is genius."

"But his father intends him for the ministry, Almy."

"I know—but God does not. All are not prophets. Don't you think, father," she added, presently, "that if you spoke to Mr. Braddock, he might look at it differently?"

Doctor Fenton laughed.

"Almy, I would attempt most anything to gratify you. I might even undertake to stop the planets in their courses, or the rivers in their flow, but to attempt to turn John Braddock when his mind is once made up, is more than I dare undertake."



"Poor little Lee!" she said, pityingly.

The next spring, Lee Braddock was sent to college as a divinity student. Miriam Blake sold her house, and moved to the city to get better employment. It was lonely at the great house on the hill, and John Braddock devoted himself more closely than ever to the interests of the church, looking forward with a thrill of pride to the time when his boy should stand at the sacred altar.

Lee had been three years at college, when one day his father received the following letter:

"DEACON JOHN BRADDOCK, — Dear Brother—Your son, whom I greatly love and respect, both for his pure morals and excellent character, has been under my tuition upwards of two years, and I regret to say that he knows but little more of Divinity than when he first entered. It seems almost impossible for him to adapt himself to this branch of study. *The boy has not a particle of logic in his composition.* Is it not possible, my dear brother, that you have mistaken the finger of Providence?"

"Of course he can remain longer, if you choose; but, in my opinion, it will be useless. I hope you will bear this disappointment with a submissive spirit. We cannot understand the decrees of God, my brother—we can only bow before them.

"M. D. FERNAULD, *Prof. Theology.*"

And so Lee Braddock came back to Milverton, and the second great wish and purpose of John Braddock's heart was dust and ashes. But he was only a little more stern, a little colder, and more unapproachable. Lee dreamed away the long sweet summer in his favorite "south wing," composing grand inspiring strains, that would some day thrill the world.

One day his father came home angry. He had heard the report that Lee—his only child—was engaged to Ethel Blake. "It should not be," he said. "No child of Alfred Blake shall ever wed with child of mine."

Lee did not deny the charge, but seeing his father's great anger, said but little.

Shortly after this Lee went up to the city. On his return he met his father in the hall.

"You have been to the city, Lee?"

"Yes, father, and I sold my music for quite a little fortune," walking toward him with a pleased flushed face, and unfolding a little roll of bills.

John Braddock waved him back with a bend of the head.

"Did you see Ethel Blake?"

"Yes, father."

"Did you tell her that you could never marry her?—that I had forbidden it?"

"No sir, I did not."

"What! will you not obey me?"

"Father, I have loved Ethel Blake ever since I can remember, and I shall not blight her life and my own to humor any man's prejudices, even if he be my father."

Lee was standing proudly erect, the blue eyes flashing and the lips growing white and stern. Even in his anger John Braddock felt a glow of pride in the boy's dauntless spirit so like his own.

"I repeat, no child of mine shall marry a child of Alfred Blake's. If you marry her, you are an alien and a castaway from my home and heart forever." Lee was silent.

"Will you cast her off?"

"Never!"

"Go, then, and may the curse—"

"Stop, stop! John Braddock!" cried his wife, throwing herself before him and clasping his knees.

"Peace, woman! What right have you to interfere?"

"I am his mother."

"Better for you, then, that he had never been born."

"O my boy! my boy! God pity me!" she moaned, sinking on the floor at his feet.

John Braddock had borne his disappointment in regard to his son's entering the ministry in silence, because God had done it; but this was, he reasoned, a purely human affair, in which his boy knowingly and willfully set aside his authority and braved his anger. There was no thought of relenting in his heart; and Lee, beneath his calm exterior, had something of the old Braddock spirit of determination; and so he, the only lineal descendant of the great estate, went out from the home of his ancestors, in his youth, and poverty, and inexperience, to battle with a world of which he was as ignorant as a newborn babe. He had only his musical talent to depend on, yet with the improvidences and thoughtlessness of youth, he took another burden on his untrained shoulders—he married Ethel Blake in less than a month from the day he left his father's house.

The two children—for they were but little else, Lee being nineteen, and Ethel sixteen

—wont to live with Miriam Blake. They could not afford a separate establishment, and beside, Miriam refused to part with her child. They lived very happily in their simple quiet way. Ethel sewed with her mother, as she had before, and Lee wrote music, which he readily sold, but which, owing to his being poor and unknown, and not himself understanding its real value, he did not get as much for as it was worth. But still they lived very comfortably and independently. They were richer than half their neighbors, for they had an inexhaustible wealth of love, and a simple and confident faith.

After Lee left Milverton, and it became known *why* he went, there was a considerable feeling in the community. People hinted that the church ought to remonstrate with brother Braddock, but when he came among them, sterner and more dignified, more punctilious in all outward observances, more ready in prayer and exhortation, more careful of the interests of the church than ever before, there was no one found willing to undertake the task.

Two years passed away, and Lee's name had never been mentioned in his father's house, save in his mother's prayers.

It was indeed Hester Braddock's death-stroke—sending away her boy. She did not fall all at once; there was no sudden breaking up of the life forces, but a gradual and almost imperceptible wasting away of the vital functions. Day by day the languid step grew slower, and the white face thinner and whiter. Mrs. Tibbets, the housekeeper, saw how day after day the steps grew unsteady, and she leaned more heavily upon her for support in the little walks she still insisted on, in the garden.

But still John Braddock did not apprehend any immediate danger, until a cold taken in the early autumn, confined her to the bed.

One night Doctor Fenton was called in great haste; a violent hemorrhage had taken place. He looked very grave when he saw the white face lying back among the pillows. Presently she beckoned to her husband. He came and knelt by the bedside.

"Our boy, John—our little Lee," speaking faintly, and with great difficulty.

"Hester," and his face was very pale and stern, "we have no child!"

"I have never asked you before, but O John! how can I die and not see my child?"

John Braddock arose from his knees and walked out of the room, and a messenger was at once despatched to the city—twenty-five miles—for Lee.

The effort of speaking exhausted her very much. Presently her lips moved. Doctor Fenton put down his ear and caught these half-articulate words:

"How can I go, my father, and the lad be not with me?" And Hester Braddock never spoke again.

In the gray spectral dawn of a November day, Lee walked up the broad steps and stood once more in his father's house. But alas! there were no loving lips to kiss him and call him "my darling;" only a mute white face, turned patiently toward heaven.

Lee did not see his father, and people thought he went immediately back to the city; but the night after the funeral a slight lithe figure walked through the drifts of dead sycamore leaves, into the bleak lonesome churchyard, and seeking out a new-made grave, threw himself beside it, laying his face lovingly on the chill earth, weeping long and passionately.

John Braddock missed very much the pale-faced woman that had done all she could to make his home happy for more than twenty years.

He had never been—save in the sending away of her boy—unkind to his wife. He made no great show of affection, probably because he did not feel it. He had taken her in her poverty and dependence, and given her home, comfort, affluence; but he had *not* given her his heart, because he had none to give. Perhaps she never knew; she was not a woman of strong feelings; there were no great depths in her nature to be satisfied. And yet, under more favorable circumstances, Hester Braddock's quiet nature might have bloomed into rare sweetness. Perhaps she sometimes saw, looking down the dim vista of the past, some sweet swift-flowing river, setting toward a charmed haven of peace and love that might have been hers, only that she missed its pleasant source in the tangled morass of life.

It was the autumn of '57, the year of the great financial crisis. It had been six years since Lee Braddock left his father's house, and through them all he had been slowly but steadily rising into notice. Hitherto his income had been amply sufficient for all their wants, but he was not prepared for the terrible drain of sickness and misfortune.

He had been at work for some time on two pieces which he thought exceeded all former efforts. But the great stringency in the money market, and the complete prostration of nearly all kinds of business, induced his publisher to decline issuing them until a more hopeful feeling prevailed.

"People do not buy any music now," he said.

Ethel and her mother were also thrown out of employment. Not a house in the city was giving out work, and many of them were bankrupt.

Lee's meagre salary as organist in one of the churches was all their dependence, and soon that failed him. He was taken ill of a slow lingering fever, induced by depression and anxiety. Their little hoard rapidly diminished, though administered with the strictest economy.

Ethel was very brave, and practised a good many pretty little deceptions to keep the truth from Lee, who was beginning to gain slowly. But at last there was but one loaf of bread and a little meal in the house. And besides, it was getting cool in the nights and mornings, and little Johnnie's shoes were out at the toes, and there was not a half-bushel of coal in the bin.

"Something must be done," Ethel said, and the idea took possession of her that if she went to Milverton, and with her own lips told John Braddock that his only child was starving—for it must come to that soon—he would relent and help them. Benny White, the man who drove the Milverton stage, was an old schoolmate of hers, and she knew he would not ask her anything to take her there.

It was with a very hopeful heart that Ethel tied on her bonnet before the little mirror, and with a little pardonable pride tried to make herself look as neat and pretty as possible, thinking with a charming little blush that maybe he might not blame Lee so much, after all. Then she kissed Johnnie, and told him to "take good care of papa," and ran out, declaring she should be too late for the stage if she did not hurry.

It was getting dusk in the long narrow streets, and one by one the street lamps sent up a pale slender flame, as Ethel Braddock, coming into the lower hall, stumbled over somebody lying prone upon the floor. She gave a little startled scream, which had the effect to arouse Lee—for it was he—and

with her assistance he managed to get up to their room.

"O Ethel!" he moaned, "see what I have done." And he held up a pocket-book to her astonished gaze.

"You see," he went on, "I lay here and listened to Johnnie crying for bread until I was nearly distracted. At last he fell asleep exhausted. I got up and sat in the chair, looking at the crowd hurrying by, not knowing or caring for my suffering. Women, too, Ethel, their rich robes trailing in the street, one yard of which would keep us from starving, when suddenly I saw a man drop this. I might have called after him, but I didn't. Instead I crept down, like a thief, and picked it up. I think I fainted then, for I knew no more until you aroused me."

Ethel took it from his hand and read the name—Richard Mallory, a well-known merchant. It was filled with bills; she did not stop to count them, but folded it quickly together.

"You must take it to him in the morning, Ethel. May he never know the temptation that assailed me."

"Well, dear?" looking at her, questioningly.

"O Lee! it was all in vain! And I knelt to him and plead with prayers and tears for just a mere pittance, to save his son from starving! All the answer he made me was, 'I have no son.' O Lee, Lee! your father's heart is like the nether millstone."

"Hush, dear! he is my father!" covering his face with his thin hand.

"But, Lee, to think of his abundance! Benny White said he was reckoned the richest man in Milverton. And then to think it is all my fault—if you hadn't offended him by marrying me, you would not be dying by inches of privation and hunger."

Lee reached out and drew the little tear-stained face down to his.

"Darling," he said, softly, "if six years ago I could have looked ahead and seen all that I must endure, even to this last terrible hour, I should have chosen as I did. It is not for myself, only for you and Johnnie, that I care."

Ethel kissed the thin white hand, caressing it tenderly.

"Lee, I believe I'll just run in to Mallory's with that pocket-book to-night. I am afraid he will be troubled about it," she said, aloud; but in her secret heart she

dared not keep all that money in the house and they so near starving!

The next morning the last slice of bread was toasted, and Ethel divided it between her husband and Johnnie. Johnnie saw it, and with a quick instinct divined the truth. And though the red lips quivered, he declared stoutly that "Johnnie wasn't hungry a bit," and resolutely refused to touch it. Lee covered his face with the bedclothes to shut out the sight.

"O Ethel! what will become of us!" a sharp agony in his voice.

"God will take care of us, Lee."

"Will he, mother? will he, *really*?" the little sober face brightening.

Ethel hesitated a moment before answering. The child's confident questioning had startled a doubt that was slowly creeping into her own heart. Then she said, "Yes, Johnnie; I am sure that he will."

Johnnie went and stood by the window, looking out thoughtfully, with his pretty dimpled hands crossed behind him. By-and-by a sudden thought came to him.

"Is God in the street, mamma?"

"Yes, dear, God is everywhere?"

Johnnie waited a moment, and then slipped quietly out and down stairs, saying softly to himself:

"I'm doing to find Dod. I dess he's forgot all about us."

He was a little fellow, scarce three years old, and many an eye turned back to look at him as he trudged along the crowded street. He was bareheaded, and a heavy mass of chestnut curls fell to his shoulders. He was so busy scanning every face he met that he did not see a great fiery black horse that came rushing down upon him from a cross street. The driver saw the child just in time, for he was almost under his feet, and drew in so suddenly as to throw him back upon his haunches.

"Hallo! You must be more careful, little fellow, or you'll get run over."

"I—I was looking for somebody," faltered Johnnie.

"Were you going this way?" pointing down the street.

Johnnie nodded.

"Then you can ride." And John Braddock—for it was he—lifted the little fellow in beside him. As he stooped a nice light bun rolled from his pocket to the seat. He had started early, and Mrs. Tibbetts had insisted on his taking a lunch.

Johnnie eyed it wistfully.

"Do you want it?" picking it up and passing it to him.

He seized it, devouring it ravenously. John Braddock looked on shocked.

"Have you had no breakfast, lit le one?"

"No, nor any supper," said Johnnie, dolefully. "You see," with sudden confidence, "we don't have much to eat at our house now. Papa is sick, and mamma can't get any work to do."

Mr. Braddock took out the other two buns and gave them to the child.

A sudden light broke over the little puzzled face, and nestling one little hand in one of his great brown ones, he exclaimed, triumphantly:

"I know who *you* are—you're Dod!"

John Braddock looked down with a rebuke on his lips, but the child's serious earnestness awed him.

"What do you mean, child?" huskily.

"Well, mamma said Dod would help us, and I thought maybe he'd forgotten about us, and I come out to find him. Mamma said he was everywhere."

"No, little one, I am not God. I am only a very weak sinful man. Now do you know where you live—can you find it?"

Johnnie looked about him a moment.

"Yes, there is the street, right there."

"Well," taking out a bright gold piece, "here is something for you. You know what it is for?"

"To buy some breakfast!"

"Can you carry it and not lose it?"

Johnnie grasped it closely in his chubby little hand.

"What is your name, little one?"

"Johnnie."

"Well, kiss me, little Johnnie." And the pure sweet lips touched his like a benediction.

"You are very sure you aint Dod?"

"Yes, child."

Before Ethel had fairly missed him, Johnnie bounded into the room, his curls dancing, and his cheeks glowing, and displayed his treasure.

After he had told his story he stood a moment looking into the fire. Presently he said:

"Mamma, if that wasn't Dod, don't you believe he sent him?"

"Yes, darling, I *know* he did."

John Braddock turned his horse's head towards home with a strange feeling at his

heart. Something about that child moved him strangely. There was a certain poise of the little ringleted head, an indescribable something that brought back the memory of another little curly head that he had been trying to put out of his heart these many years.

And besides, John Braddock had not felt very comfortable in his mind since Ethel's visit. He had not slept a wink all night, and although he would not own it even to himself, his journey to town was with a faint thought—not hardly a hope—that he might in some way encounter him.

As he got out of the wagon at his door a little something in the bottom on the mat caught his eye. He stooped and picked it up, and went into the house. Something evidently troubled him; he was restless and uneasy. By-and-by he went up to his room, and went to a little writing-desk, and unlocking it, took out a little faded picture of a fair blue-eyed little boy with soft flaxen curls.

"No," he said, "he doesn't look like this, and yet he makes me think of him so." He turned the picture to the light, and as he did so the little packet he had in his hand fell to the desk. "He is sick and starving—yes, starving; that is what she said," he said, huskily. "It was all his own fault—the headstrong boy. And yet I should have done just so! I should have despised him if he had not clung to her. How pretty she looked yesterday! how like her mother!"

Glancing down at the desk, he saw the pin had fallen out, and a strip of faded pink ribbon lay half unfolded. It came across him so suddenly he grew dizzy. He knew what was in it, but he opened it and took out a little coil of purple-black hair, and one of brown, twisted lightly together.

Ah! how well he remembered. There had been a picnic, and a sail on the river, and afterward, in the golden twilight—all days were golden to him then—sitting on the low vine-covered veranda at her father's house, they had fixed their wedding-day. And he had sportively asked her for a token, and she had clipped a lock from each of their heads, and twisting them together, had wrapped them laughingly in a piece of pink ribbon at her waist. How well he remembered just how she looked that night! Given to the wild roses in her hair. Afterward, in his anger, he had sent it back to her.

But how came that child by it, for he must have dropped it? A thought came across him so suddenly that he staggered and leaned against the mantel for support.

What if that were Lee's child! But no, it could not be; Lee had no child—at least, not that he had ever heard. To be sure he had never taken the trouble to inquire, but he had somehow gotten that impression.

He went to the table; a Bible lay open on it, and glancing down, his eye caught these words: "Whosoever provideth not for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." The letters seemed to rise up and confront him. He closed the book, but he saw them still. They beckoned to him with thin bloodless fingers, and mocked him with wan pallid lips. He stooped and picked up the little picture.

"O Lee! little Lee! my boy, my boy! God in heaven forgive me!" he cried out, his voice sharp with agony.

Again he heard the soft ripple of childish laughter through the great lonely house, and felt the breath from the half-parted lips, and the light touch of the soft silky curls against his face, as the little feet clambered up the back of his chair "to kiss papa." In this new swift light the long cold years that lay between faded away like the morning mist, and for the first time in thirty years John Braddock wept. The scales had fallen from his eyes, and he saw himself as he really was, a whited sepulchre, having the form of godliness without its spirit.

It was a night of bitter agony and wrestling, but with the dawn a new sweet peace came into his soul; and though John Braddock had been a member of Milverton church nigh thirty years, he was never truly "born again" until that night.

In the morning he sent for his house-keeper. "Mrs. Tibbetts," he said, "I am going into the city to-day, and I think I shall bring company home with me. I want you to open and brighten up the house all you can. You will know what to do better than I can tell you, only make it look homelike and cheerful, and have a bright wood-fire in the sitting-room, for it will be chilly. And here is the key of the south wing; arrange that also. And perhaps," pausing and flushing slightly, "it would be well enough to look at the guest-chamber in the main building."

He went out, leaving Mrs. Tibbetts staring in blank amazement. What had come over the deacon, and who was he going to bring home with him, that he should look so pleased and happy? At length a bright thought struck her—he was going to get married.

"That is it, you may depend," she said to Jane, the kitchen girl, "for he's gone with his new span of grays and the best carriage. I declare, I hardly knew him; his face fairly shone." And here the good lady fell to wondering if the departed Tibbetts looked like that on his wedding-day.

It was a busy day at the great house; rooms were swept and dusted, soft downy feather-beds were tossed and beaten until each particular feather stood on its own responsibility. The finest of snowy linen sheets and dainty hem-stitched pillow-cases were brought into requisition, and the long-closed rooms looked fresh and cheerful once more.

There were wonderful achievements in the kitchen likewise, and the staid serious-looking sitting-room was metamorphosed into one of the cosiest of little paradises imaginable. Jane brought in her chrysanthemums, and put them in the window, and a vase of late asters on the mantel.

While this was being enacted in Milverton, quite a different scene was transpiring in the city. Ethel had just put on her bonnet to go out to purchase some food with the money so providentially sent, when a man's step, firm and quick, sounded on the stair. She opened the door, and started back aghast at the sight of the very man who only yesterday she had knelt and prayed to for help.

"Child," he said, taking hold of her shoulder almost roughly, "Lee—where is he?"

She pointed silently to the bed.

John Braddock sprang across the room and knelt sobbing by the bedside.

"O Lee! my poor boy! can you ever forgive the great wrong I have done you?" kissing the thin wasted hand.

"O father, I never laid up anything against you. God knows I did not. I blighted all your hopes for me, but I could not help it."

A little soft round arm stole round John Braddock's neck, and a wealth of bright chestnut curls fell over his face, and a sweet lisping voice said:

"Don't cry. Johnnie loves you."  
He caught him suddenly to his bosom.  
"Is this your boy, Lee?"

"Yes, father; you see we called him after you."

Ethel had come and knelt by the bed, one hand stroking tenderly the wan white face of her husband, the other firmly clasped in that of her new-found father. This was the tableau that met the startled gaze of Miriam Blake as she came in from the next block where she was nursing a lady who was ill.

When John Braddock took her hand he trembled like a bashful schoolboy. He had not touched her hand, or spoken to her, since the night they parted in anger so many long weary years ago.

Time had dealt tenderly with Miriam Blake, for despite the faint lines of suffering about the mouth, and a few threads of silver in her still magnificent hair, she was still a splendid woman, and John Braddock thought more beautiful than he had ever seen her.

Just as the pale slant October sunshine was slowly fading from the Milverton hills, Mrs. Tibbetts, looking out for the fortieth time, saw the span of grays coming leisurely up the hill. She noticed that the carriage was full, and saw little Johnnie on the front seat. "I guess he's married a widow," was her mental comment; but when she saw him assist out Miriam and Ethel, it all came to her, even before he had lifted out a slight muffled figure from among the pillows and cushions. Mrs. Tibbetts went out to help him, but he took him in his arms as if he had been a baby, and bore him into the bright cheery sitting-room, and laid him on the lounge. But not until he had held him a moment closely to his heart, and kissed with tremulous lips the white closed lids that were vainly trying to keep back the tears.

Mrs. Tibbetts could wait no longer, but threw herself down beside him, kissing him, and calling him the old tender pet names she used when she was a little child.

"O bless the dear Lord!" she sobbed, "that ever I have lived to see this happy day."

And indeed there was not a dry eye in the room; and even Jane, seeing them from her seat in the dining-room, was weeping softly to herself from very sympathy. Mr. Braddock saw her.

"Jane, my dear little girl, come in here," he called.

She came slowly forward, wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron.

"Well, Jane, do you think you can take care of all these folks I have brought you?"

"Bless you, yes sir; the more the better, as long as we are all so happy."

"Happy? Why, girl, don't you see we are all crying?"

"Ah yes! but it isn't the kind that hurts. They're blessed tears, sir." And so they were.

The next morning Miriam Blake was standing by the window in the sitting-room. A step close beside her startled her. She looked up and met a look that she well remembered in John Braddock's eyes. He had a little fold of faded pink ribbon in his hand; he unrolled it slowly, watching her face the while. Suddenly she grew white, reaching out her hand with a quick motion. He caught the hand and held it fast.

"O where did you get it?" she faltered.

"Johnnie says he found it in your work-box. You remember them, Miriam?"

"O John! I have never forgotten."

"O my darling!" he said, passionately, drawing her to his heart.

He stood a little while holding her thus, then, softly:

"We will be married to-day, dear."

"Indeed and we will not, sir," with a pretty little touch of her old imperiousness. "I am not at all sure that I will marry you at all."

"O Miriam! Miriam! my heart has hungered and thirsted for your love thirty long desolate years. I am fifty years old to-day, and, darling, it will be only a little while at best. O Miriam, do not deny my life this late blossoming."

Just at this moment, unknown to them, Ethel looked into the sitting-room for something, and very evidently saw something she had not expected. She started back with affright at such passionate wooing, wondering, as she flew lightly up stairs, what the Milverton church would say if they had seen their deacon just then!

She burst into the sunny south wing, where Lee was lying, a smile of dreamy content in his eyes, and startled him with the story of her discovery, adding:

"Your father is ever so much nicer a lover than ever you were, Lee; he's just splendid; and I shall be downright angry

with mamma if she should reject him."

But she had no need, for before another sunsetting John Braddock and Miriam Blake were united in the sight of men, as they had long been in the sight of God. And so Mrs. Tibbette was right, after all.

All Milverton marvelled over the wonderful change in Deacon Braddock. A genial heartiness took the place of the olden gravity of demeanor. But what he lost in dignity and sternness, was more than made up in fervor and unction. Harsh rebuke and stern denunciation were succeeded by earnest tender appeals that were far more irresistible. And Aunt Polly Goodspeed—relict of the worthy deacon—said, "Verily the Lord had granted a new measure of grace to his chosen vessel."

"Almy, my dear," said Doctor Fenton, coming in to his daughter's—now Mrs. Denver—"evidently the age of miracles is not yet passed. I never saw such a change in a man in my life."

"Who, father?"

"Why, Braddock, to be sure. I met him just now. He grasped my hand warmly, saying, 'Come up and see us, doctor. I want all my friends to come and see how happy we are.' And as I live there were tears in his eyes, and his voice was husky with emotion."

"Ah, father, what do you think of 'turning the rivers and planets in their courses' now?" laughed Almy.

"I think, my dear," said the doctor, reverently, "that God's hand hath smitten the rock, and the waters have gushed out."

Lee Braddock, the eminent and successful composer, is now organist in the Presbyterian church at Milverton—not the old square red church, but a new freestone one, with mullioned windows and richly frescoed ceilings. For Milverton has grown wealthy and populous in these years. There have been reservoirs built, and new streams let in, and the old sluggish river is now a mighty current, with half a score of flourishing mills on its banks. Other churches, too, have sprung up, and more than one slender spire points its long white finger to heaven from the green Milverton hills.

Altogether, it is one of the loveliest of our New England villages, and one of the happiest; but among them all, none quite so supremely blessed as the Braddock family.

## THE WIDOW ARMSBY.

BY ELIZABETH BIGELOW.

I WAS smoking my third Havana, and meditating upon a variety of things—among others the rise in Erie stock, the inscrutable fate that had left me a bachelor so many years, the depth of feminine depravity that made my sister Laura drag me to Newport, every season, when I might go to W—, and luxuriate in trout-fishing and shirt-sleeves—when the postman brought my mail. There was a letter from Laura. I read all the others first. Not but that I think a great deal of Laura, but she is addicted to the customary feminine failings, exaggeration and prolixity, which make her letters rather exasperating to a man of my temperament, who invariably calls a spade a spade, and says what he has to say in the smallest possible space. When I had finished reading the others I could scarcely summon courage to open Laura's—I knew so well that she was laying some new snare for my unwary feet. Doubtless Newport and her dear friend Miss Angelique De Flummerie were not enough for *this* season. Still fate is sometimes kinder than our de-

serts; there was a bare possibility that she might be going to let me off for this summer. Emboldened by that thought I opened it and read:

“DEAR JACK,—It is just the most fortunate thing imaginable that you are coming down next Tuesday, for my dear friend and schoolmate Marion Earl, of whom you have often heard me speak, is coming, too, and alone, and will be delighted to have you for an escort. She is visiting in Albany, now, but will be in the ladies' room at the — Station, at 10 o'clock, *Tuesday morning*. I send a photograph, so that you may be sure to know her. Don't forget that she is Mrs. Armsby now, she married Jo Armsby, three years ago, and he only lived a few months after, you know.” (Yes, I did know Jo Armsby—a reckless dissipated fool. What could a girl be who would marry him?) “I know you will be delighted to make yourself agreeable to dear Marion, and you can't help being charmed with her—she is so brilliant and fascinating.”

Brilliant and fascinating! If there is any-



thing in the world that I hate it is a woman who is called "brilliant and fascinating." I groaned in agony of spirit. But there was nothing for it but to hunt up "dear Marion," see to all her trunks, satchels, umbrellas and poodles—Laura's dear friends always travelled with poodles—see that she had a comfortable seat, and was neither too cold nor too warm, had plenty of books and bananas, and, worst of all, beguile her soul with small talk incessantly!—your brilliant and fascinating woman always wants to talk! Now perhaps you may think, especially if you are a sl <sup>ut</sup>, that I was a cynical old bachelor. I was nothing of the sort. The trouble was that I had an ideal of womanhood, and my sister's dear friends didn't come up to it. They were all "women of the period." Abominable expression, but more abominable things!—at least I *used* to think so. My ideal was a dove-eyed, soft-voiced little woman, with light soft hair, not crimped, or frizzed, or any of those abominations, but combed "Mádonna-wise," and entirely superior to the dictates of fashion in her dress. She wore plain, graceful, flowing robes, and artistic combinations of color, but flounces, overskirts and furbelows—never!

Laura was accustomed to ask me, sarcastically, if I ever expected to find this paragon of perfection, and if I did "did I expect to appear in public with her?"

I can hardly say that I *did* expect ever to find her, and therefore I expected to live, till the end of my days, a lonely, forlorn, melancholy old bachelor.

Still I am only thirty-three, and had not quite given up the search.

But among Laura's friends I should never find her, that was certain. And this one was a widow—worse and worse! But there was no need for me to "beware of vidders." I had, naturally, a perfect horror of them; not all the vidders in the universe could beguile me.

The Widow Armsby's photograph had dropped to the floor. It occurred to me, then, to see how she looked—a rather necessary proceeding, you will allow, if I was to recognize her in a crowded waiting-room, by that means.

There was nothing particular about the face. It was rather well shaped, and had a pleasant expression, the eyes and hair, I judged, were dark; the hair was gotten up in the latest style, of course, crimped, and

frizzed, and puffed, and fluffed, and braided, and curled, till the head looked like the tower of Babel.

I gazed at the picture till I thought I should know the Widow Armsby if I saw her, and then put it in my pocket, where I could have it to look at on Tuesday morning if I should get puzzled.

I *did* get very much puzzled, on Tuesday morning. The waiting-room was pretty well filled, but though I had thought the face such an ordinary one there was not a lady there who at all resembled the picture. I took the photograph out of my pocket and studied it furtively, until a pair of school-girls caught me at it, and began to giggle, after the manner of the species, thinking, no doubt, that it was affection which riveted my eyes upon the Widow Armsby's features—they never were more mistaken! I walked around the room, and looked inquiringly at every woman who might possibly be supposed to be the Widow Armsby. Not one of them looked at all responsive. My photograph had been forwarded to the Widow Armsby, and as it was a striking likeness—glasses and all—she must have recognized me if she was there. I made a frantic leap on board the last car, just as it was slipping out of the depot. I must be on duty at Newport, widow or no widow.

My spirits rose. I had done my duty, and yet I was not burdened with the Widow Armsby!

Suddenly an elegant embroidered little satchel, with the letter A on it, caught my eye. It was hanging directly over the seat in front of me. A stood for Armsby; that was what attracted my attention. I looked at its owner. She was a "girl of the period;" there was no question about that. She had on what is called a "stylish" travelling dress, a mass of crinkled hair drawn down over her forehead, a little hat with a bird's wing on it, set jauntily on the top of a heap of coal-black braids and puffs. Her profile was turned towards me, and I could see that she had a straight little nose, and long lashes. I scrutinized her face, because I thought she might possibly be the Widow Armsby, and had not liked the looks of my photograph sufficiently well to wait for me.

She turned and looked at me, as was quite natural. But then having looked once she turned and looked again. I would not have you suppose that was an unusual occurrence.

I am considered to be a particularly good-looking man, and young ladies often look at me twice, but I fancied I saw in her eyes a sort of recognition—bright black eyes they were, with a saucy make-fun-of-everything sort of expression to them—not my dove-eyed ideal by any means! But it might be Mrs. Armsby; the features were certainly not unlike hers; she might perhaps make an ordinary-looking picture, though those eyes were by no means ordinary!

But I couldn't quite make up my mind to speak to her, on the strength of an A on her travelling bag, and a resemblance that *might* be purely imaginary. Besides, if she were the Widow Armsby she had given me the slip, and I wasn't obliged to devote myself to her. But I *did* wish she would turn round once more. She didn't, however. She stuck her ticket in her hatband—(O those "girl of the period" ways!—my ideal could never be capable of sticking her ticket in her hatband) and devoted herself to a paper-covered novel.

I read my newspaper; it was singularly dull and uninteresting, and I flavored it, occasionally, by glances at a straight little nose and long lashes. I wondered if anybody beyond childhood ever had such very long lashes before. I had never thought of it before, but I added them now to the sweet and seraphic face of my "ideal."

Suddenly she laid down her book, and took a letter from her pocket. I leaned over and looked at the superscription. I considered it justifiable under the circumstances—not because I admired her eyelashes, you understand, but because she might be Mrs. Armsby. Sure enough! the letter was directed to "Mrs. M. Armsby." I rose impulsively.

"I have the pleasure of speaking to Mrs. Armsby, I believe? I—I—have your photograph." (Those saucy black eyes were looking mercilessly straight at me, and I blushed and stammered like a schoolboy.) "I expected to find you in the waiting-room. I—I—am very sorry to have missed you!"

"You are Uncle John, then?" she said, frankly, extending a daintily gloved little hand.

"Why—why, yes, Brother Ned's children call me so sometimes!" I stammered. Uncle John sounds very old bachelorish, some way. I didn't fancy it, at all.

"I am so glad to have met you! I dislike travelling alone so much? I quite dreaded

the journey! When you didn't come to the hotel, I thought something must have prevented you from meeting me. I didn't think of looking in the waiting-room."

At the hotel! O, that was so like Laura! I thought with a smothered groan. She had not mentioned a hotel to me, and here was this charming little creature thinking I had neglected her!

"It was bad enough coming all the way from Chicago, alone," she warbled on, in such a birdlike voice!—once I *might* have called it *rattling*, for she did talk a good deal, but ah! not now. Was it possible that I, a man of thirty-three, with an ideal, was subjugated by a pair of saucy black eyes, and some long lashes, belonging, too, to an unmistakable "girl of the period?"

Alas! I could not tell. Some change had certainly "come over the spirit of my dream."

"I am so impatient to see the dear children again—I think they are the cutest, cunningest little things! Flossy is my especial favorite."

Now as my niece Flossy had arrived at the mature age of five or six weeks I thought Mrs. Armsby had rather strange taste. As I had never had the pleasure of meeting my youthful relative, and had, indeed, been apprised only the day before that her name was Flossy, I could not be expected to respond very cordially to this sentiment.

I could not be expected to, I say, but I did!—what sentiment wouldn't I have responded to, backed by those eyes and that bewitching little smile?

"The loveliest of them all! and such a sweet name!" murmured I, like an imbecile.

"And Nellie—isn't she a darling?"

Who was Nellie? Not one of Ned's children! Possibly one of Laura's friends; I didn't remember all their names. It wouldn't be safe for me to say that she was "a darling" upon uncertainties, but I *did* think it safe to respond, with some enthusiasm, "she's a very nice girl."

"A nice girl?" And the saucy eyes danced. "Why I mean the little Spitz dog!"

"O yes, yes, certainly! a very nice dog," stammered I, inwardly cursing my stupidity in not remembering the name of the wretched little beast that was always under my feet, at Ned's.

She talked about a good many other people whose names I didn't remember. How I wished I had taken more interest in

Laura's friends! If they had only been more like *her* I should have had no occasion for that regret!

I took excellent care of her, or so she said, with a bright little smile, and what a delightful thing it was to take care of her!

After we got over talking about our mutual friends, and on to general subjects, I grew gradually more at ease; I felt as if the hours were slipping by in a delightful dream.

"We are almost there!" she said, suddenly.

"O, Newport is a good many miles away, yet!" I said, almost wishing we might never get there, to have any interruption to this blissful dream.

"Newport? But I am not going to Newport. Are you? I thought you were going directly to Alice's. She wrote me that you were."

This was very bewildering. I began to perceive that there was a mistake somewhere.

"I don't know Alice," I said. "I am going to Newport, to meet my sister Laura, who wrote me that you were going there, too."

"I am going to K—, to visit my sister, who is married and lives there; and she wrote me that her husband's uncle would come to the hotel for me. Aren't you Uncle John?"

"I am Uncle John to my brother's children, but not to your sister's husband, I am afraid," said I, dolefully.

The black eyes danced like will-o'-the-wisps.

"It is too funny for anything!" she declared. "I thought you were very unlike Ella's description of Uncle John—so much younger than I supposed he was!"

At this interesting moment the cars stopped, and the conductor shouted K—.

"O dear me! I mustn't get left!" said my fair companion, in a flutter. "It is such a funny thing altogether!—and I am so much obliged to you—"

"Allow me to give you my card!" stammered I, as I assisted her out, hardly awake yet to the situation," and—and to hope—"

And then I saw her gathered to the embraces of half a dozen women, and a very black-whiskered young man, with a fierce pang of jealousy.

She was gone!—and I didn't even know the name of her brother-in-law; knew nothing about her except that she was the Wid-

ow Armsby! Did I even know that? Yes, I had seen the name on her letter, and she had acknowledged it when I spoke to her. But she couldn't be Laura's Widow Armsby, therefore she couldn't be Jo Armsby's widow. Of course not! She never could have married an unprincipled scamp like him.

I fell to wondering what her husband was like. What her second husband would be like. I would be the fortunate man, or perish in the attempt!

I reached Newport in a dream. I was introduced to the Widow Armsby, who had changed her plans and got there before me, still in a dream.

"Your very ideal!" whispered Laura, and I looked at her again.

She was a little pale woman, with drab hair, combed plainly behind her ears, and done up plainly in a "pug," behind. She had on a very long flowing robe, of white muslin, and not an ornament of any kind.

I have my suspicions that the Widow Armsby (this Widow Armsby) had gotten herself up for my especial benefit, as I afterwards saw her in very different guise.

"Jack, isn't she lovely?" said Laura, as soon as we were alone. "She looks so like an angel!"

"She looks like the Witch of Endor!" said I, ungallantly. And Laura said I was a brute, and she would like to know what my "ideal" was.

I went to K—, on the early morning train.

How I was going to find my inamorata was more than I knew, but find her I would.

I asked the proprietor of the hotel if he knew where Mrs. Armsby of Chicago was visiting. He didn't know. I went to the post-office, the two dry goods stores, the circulating library, with the same result. At last I went boldly up to the door of a private house. It looked as if she were there, I don't know why. Perhaps there is an additional sense bestowed upon people as much in love as I was—in compensation for the sense that is taken away. Anyway I felt sure she was there.

A round curly head stuck itself out of the door.

"My Aunt Mabel is here—she isn't Mrs.—she's only a young lady," it responded to my question.

Could it be possible that she *wasn't* the Widow Armsby, after all? Perhaps it might

have been *Miss* that I saw on the letter!

I had not time to reflect before the dancing eyes, the bewitching smile were before me. There was a bewitching blush too, now, and a little shyness, that set me quite at my ease. What is the use of telling any more? If I hadn't come off victor, if I hadn't been the luckiest fellow alive, do you suppose I ever should have told this story at all?

The Widow Armsby found her second fate at Newport that summer (but not while masquerading as my "ideal"), and I made her an elegant wedding present as a slight expression of the gratitude I owed her.

For if it had not been for her I might have been a forlorn and miserable old bachelor to this day, instead of being married to the brightest eyes that ever danced, and the truest little heart that ever beat!



## THE WORLDS IN THE SKY.

BY REV. DR. H. STANDISH.

George Sand wrote in confidence to a friend that if, after death, her soul were to transmigrate into another planet, she would like it to be one where they could neither read nor write. For my own part, were I not a terrestrial creature, I think I should like to have been born in the planet Mars. Such at least is the conclusion to which I have been led by the perusal of M. Camille Flammarion's last work, *Les Terres du Ciel*, which gives, in eloquent and exhaustive terms, the latest intelligence about all the known planets, great and small, besides speculations regarding others unknown.

Many people fancy that Venus must be a delightful residence, because she looks so clear and bright. But all is not gold, nor even silver, that glitters, and Venus can hardly be a worldly paradise. Splendor may be all very well, but comforts merit a passing thought. There is no fault to be found with Venus's days and nights in central latitudes; they are much the same as ours, only just a trifle shorter. But her years put everybody in the position of the famous beggar, whose days had dwindled to the shortest span. Instead of Earth's allowance of three hundred and sixty-five, sometimes sixty-six, days, Venus only gives you two hundred and thirty-one, not eight months in lieu of twelve. If the term of life there, as here, be threescore years and ten, four months out of twelve is a terrible discount to deduct for the pleasure of dwelling on the brilliant evening star which is our next-door neighbor.

And then, how quickly quarter-day comes round! That inconvenience, however, or perhaps convenience, takes its quality from circumstances; I mean ours, yours or mine, according as they are straightened or easy. If we are over-housed and over-established, with two horses when we can only afford one, and a butler out of livery when an adolescent butler would be more prudent, Venus's quarter-day must give fearfully frequent pinches; but if we are overbalanced at our banker's with more planetary three-per-cents and midland-Venus railway dividends coming in than we spend, in that case

quarter-day may dawn upon us as often as it pleases.

Neither have you, in Venus, the choice of giving servants a month's warning or a month's wages; neither do monthly magazines, by delighting their readers, afford literary ladies and gentlemen opportunities of earning welcome guineas; neither are there tide-tables nor tidal trains for the navigation of channels, they being all tideless; no lovers there can take moonlight walks; all the consequence of Venus having no moon.

The climate? Well; Russia exaggerated; not an Eden bathed in eternal spring. The seasons, instead of being lukewarm and undecided, manifest unmistakably what they are and mean. The sun stares at you fiercely, opening his eye one full third wider than with us. That would be a comparative trifle if Venus waltzed round her orbit in as upright a position as we do. But in consequence of the great inclination of her axis, her polar overlap her tropical regions, producing two zones, much wider than our temperate zones, whose inhabitants are exposed to alternations of excessive heat and cold. In fact there are no temperate zones. The snow and ice have no time to accumulate; a thaw sets in and spring passes like a dream. The agitation of the winds, the rains and tempests, surpass in continuance and violence anything we witness here. There is constant evaporation from the seas, with the immediate precipitation of torrential showers, and the clouds vexatiously resulting thence are the great impediment to our study of Venus's topography.

Picturesque this and even sublime, no doubt, but inconvenient for creatures constituted as we are. M. Flammarion, however, suggests a means, which you shall shortly learn, how climatal difficulties may probably be got over. And here let me remark that our own earth teaches us to be cautious, in saying that living beings cannot exist under circumstances for which we know no precedent. We, men and women, are air-breathing animals; we know that, if we walk into water and fill our lungs with it

Instead of air, we die; that life under water, without air, for us is impossible. If our telescopes showed us a world entirely covered with water we would naturally and reasonably believe that it was absolutely uninhabited and uninhabitable, had not the planet we dwell on taught us the possibility, by their wondrous adaptation to the medium they live in, of fishes, seals, porpoises, and whales leading long and pleasant lives. If we had not the example of fish before our eyes, no philosopher could contrive, or admit the existence of, creatures breathing aerated water only. The same of flying things. Even although we might have invented balloons, if we had no bats, birds, or winged insects to convince us of the fact, we should treat as fabulous and absurd the idea that a creature heavier than air could raise itself in air by mere muscular power, and convert the gaseous and invisible atmosphere into a support for rapid and long-sustained locomotion. These two simple instances are sufficient to prove that human experiences are quite incapable of setting limits to creative adaptations, under conditions which might seem to render life impossible.

Venus's mountains are much higher than ours—namely, more than twice as high as the Himalayas, her northern hemisphere being more mountainous than the southern. Her Alpine Clubs therefore have fine opportunities for glorious and foolhardy scaling of peaks, without much inconvenience, as it happens, from rarefied air; unless M. Flammarion's supposition removes all danger whatever. The case is this: Venus's atmosphere—whose ordinary state is to be covered with clouds, thereby tempering the rays of the broad-disked sun—although composed of the same gases as ours, is thicker and denser than our own, and more saturated with aqueous vapor, which must feel like breathing diluted water. The deep atmosphere gives lengthened twilights as some compensation for the want of a moon. But with an atmosphere expressly made for flight, why should not the Aphroditeans be organized for flying? Thus can they escape the contrasts of winter and summer by migrating, like our storks and swallows, from hemisphere to hemisphere. Venus's seas are Mediterraneans rather than oceans; the influence of their waters moderates either extreme of temperature; and it is thither that frozen-out or scorched-out populations

flock by the help of fleet and powerful wings, instead of by the tardy railways which carry our shivering invalids to winter in the South. The same means enable bashful couples to keep rendezvous on the top of Aphroditean Matterhorns, and allow parties sociably inclined to arrange ice-eating picnics on Venus's Mount Rosas. Nevertheless, graceful and easy as flight looks, it must be hard work, and, when one is lazily inclined, a great exertion. All things considered, I will not transmigrate to Venus, unless on compulsion.

Of life on Jupiter we know less, and that little is not inviting. As a slightly extenuating circumstance, in consequence of his upright axis, he enjoys, in place of four seasons, perpetual spring; but that spring may be more than mild, with a temperature perhaps of boiling water in the shade. For it is not certain how far Jupiter has cooled down from the incandescent state in which he parted from the Sun. Even if he has formed a solid outside crust, walking on its surface may still be warm work. Possibly it is covered with hot marshes and tall rank vegetation like that which supplied our store of coal, with jungles of gigantic club-mosses and ferns, the haunts of monster megalosauri and other long-jawed, big-eyed reptiles, amongst whom were a man to appear he would be immediately snapped up as a dainty tid-bit. Jovine geography remains unknown at present, and life is probably only at its dawn. The famous changeable bands which streak his disk are so many shifting zones of impenetrable fog, occasionally lighted up by auroræ boreales, which prevent our getting a good look at his actual surface. Consequently, his inhabitants do not often see either the Sun, their four moons, or the starry heavens. Besides the continuous bands, and above them, clouds proper are driven along the equatorial regions by trade-winds beyond comparison more violent than ours. By and by, most likely, when Jupiter's fiery youth has passed, those vapors will be condensed into rain and solidified into carbon, the sky will become clear, and our posterity, peeping through perfected instruments, will trace the distribution of land and water, if not the course of rivers and the sites of cities.

Jupiter's years are long enough, and to spare—nearly twelve of ours—making leasehold property almost as good as freehold. A damsel there of sweet seventeen, is a

*doubly centenary matron with us. His days, on the other hand, are in all latitudes ridiculously short. A day and a night together are over in less than ten hours. Existence is almost entirely occupied by the process of going to bed and getting up again. As to dressing, ladies attending queenly drawing-rooms have to begin over night to be ready by next noontime. That penance, however, has been performed by terrestrial belles, when head-dresses were high and hair-dressers scarce.*

Jupiter is too big to suit our ideas of comfort—twelve hundred and thirty times bigger than we are. If Jupiter were an orange, we should be only a pea. On him, we should feel lost, like the trusty man and wife without encumbrance, deputed to keep the rats out of a vast country mansion during the owner's absence abroad. The possession of one moon, like ours, is pleasant enough, but Jupiter's four moons must render all lunar reckonings a puzzle. Only think of four different sorts of months, and four different fluxes and refluxes of tides! When a prisoner there gets so many calendar months, is he at liberty to choose the shortest? Although Jupiter is only a quarter as dense as we are, in consequence of his enormous size, everything on his surface is twice and a half as heavy as here. The baby you dandle so pleased and so proud would, on Jupiter, severely tax your arms to lift it. Lapdogs, poor dears, would be as good as suppressed. On the satellites, which are doubtless inhabited at the present date, things are made more pleasant. Still, upon the whole, I had rather not go to Jupiter or to either of his four attendant moons, in spite of their respectable dimensions.

Saturn has a complicated system, a universe in little, all his own; central globe, rings three or more, and satellites eight. Popularly, he is an unlucky planet, the patron of moping hypochondriacs, the symbol of predestined misfortune. "Saturnine" means crabbed, gloomy, morose. Heavy and poisonous lead is his representative metal; which is inconsistent with the fact, because he is absurdly light for a world pretending to be substantial. Were he to fall into an ocean like ours—our own is not big enough to hold him—he would float on it like a ball of cork, or, more correctly, of maple-wood. His year is nearly thirty times as long as ours. His day and

night, of only ten hours sixteen minutes in all, present the same inconvenience as Jupiter's. The seasons, each more than seven years long, resemble ours, but the general temperature is probably higher. Saturn still retains some of his primordial heat. We never behold his actual surface, no more than Jupiter's, except perhaps at the polar regions; for a dense atmosphere, laden with cloud and vapor, and containing gases non-existent with us, envelops this slightly solid globe, on whose surface, in spite of its colossal size, weights are only one-tenth heavier than with us. Its inhabitants, according to M. Flammarion thirty times more long-lived than ourselves, are strictly aerial, with transparent bodies, highly sensitive, swimming in the atmosphere like fish, rolling about in its various strata like the balloons imitating animals sent up as pilots before a serious ascent, and, as was once believed of birds of paradise, never alighting on the ground or perching on trees. Now and then they may sit on banks of clouds, as the gods of mythology did when assembled on the summit of Mount Olympus.

And this is a matter not of choice, but of necessity. If the atmosphere be as deep as it looks, it must exert at its base an enormous pressure, and be denser and heavier than the objects on the planet's surface. Under those strange circumstances, creatures organized on aerostatic principles can only reach the soil by plunging and diving; to which soil they must hold hard and fast if they wish to remain there. But the air being filled with all sorts of articles saves its inhabitants the trouble of searching after them below. Moreover, the attraction of the rings diminishes the weight of objects, and there is a zone between them and the central globe where bodies have no weight at all, but tend to fall as much one way as the other, and therefore hang suspended, unless the atmosphere allows the Saturnians to fly and fetch them, and perhaps take a morning walk afterwards on the rings, which no one supposes to be the permanent homes of living creatures. Would you like to make Saturn your future residence? I take the liberty of guessing that you would not.

It is useless to go farther afield in search of lodgings in the Solar System. We will return to our neighbor Mars, who perhaps may suit us. Mars, like Venus, has no

moon, and therefore has neither lunatics nor lunatic asylums. Mars's day is nearly forty minutes longer than ours, a convenient margin for unpunctual people. Its exact duration within the tenth of a second is known to our astronomers, who, unreasonable men, are not yet satisfied, but recommend further observations next autumn, when the planet will be favorably situated "in opposition." His year is nearly twice as long as ours; to which few will object if the term of life be proportionally extended. Geographical zones of climate exist, as here; atmosphere, analogous to our own; seasons, much the same, only twice as long; inhabitants lighter, more active and more centurian than ourselves.

I write with M. Flammarion's *Plantsphere* or *dattened Map of Mars* before me. So complete and precise is it, that one is surprised to see on it "Regions still unknown, because these latitudes in winter are covered with north-polar snows." It is a pleasure to know that there is rather more land than water in Mars, the whole nicely interlarded together, like the fat and lean in well-fed meat. You may travel round the world almost dry-foot, and therefore with a total exemption from the qualms excited by aqueous undulation. What a blessing that, even if there were nothing else to recommend the planet! The seas are not real oceans, but tideless Mediterraneans connected by pleasant Bosphoruses, unvexed, let us hope, by Eastern questions.

True, we have not yet caught sight of the natives. But when we see a railway train rushing along in the distance, although driver, stoker, passengers, and guard are all and every one of them invisible, we are perfectly certain that there they are. And when we behold Mars, with his continents, gulfs, clouds and polar snows—which are his first, second, third and fourth class carriages—passing us at more than railway speed, may we not be sure that he too carries passengers, who are not so very different from us after all? Nevertheless, there are causes for variation from ourselves in the living organisms that exist on his surface.

Mars is considerably smaller than Terra—his diameter is about the half of hers—and lighter, also, in proportion to his size. A journey round him is no formidable undertaking; in fact, no more than a pleasant tour. Weight on his surface is less than on any other planet in our system. The

muscular effort necessary, here, for leaping would carry a lad, there, over the tops of houses. Animals and vegetables are taller than with us, although the world itself is smaller. It is not the volume of a globe which regulates the dimensions of creatures living on its surface, but the intensity of weight or gravity relatively to the media (air or water) in which those creatures have to pass their lives. With us, men twice or three times as tall as we are would be inconvenienced by their own proper weight; the greater stability given by their four legs to quadrupeds allows them to attain larger proportions. In water the size of animals can be still further increased by the specific lightness which they thence acquire. With us, a certain number of creatures are winged; but in Mars, from the slight impediment offered by weight, all the superior animals are probably gifted with flight. For the same reason—namely, the feeble central attraction—Mars's plants would attain a stature unknown in the whole range of our vegetable kingdom.

Further details and arguments might be produced in favor of Mars's eligibility; but it is time to return home to Earth, remembering that we, too, are a World in the Sky—a heavenly body, a shining light—from whom great things are expected by neighboring planetarians. Only the other day, when a pair of affianced Martials were taking their evening stroll beneath the shade of trees which would overtop the loftiest pyramid of Egypt, the lady whispered to her lover, "Look at that lovely star, Terra, now rising from Newton's Ocean. How bright and pure she looks! a world of innocence, a paradise whose inmates are not yet driven out, the seat of an unceasing golden age! Oh that we had the wings of a comet, that we might fly away together and be at rest there! Happy, happy Terra, whose inhabitants drink only of the crystal brook; where universal honesty reigns supreme, and cheating, in all its forms, is unknown; where no hurricanes strew the seas with wrecks and the land with ruins; where wicked and bloody wars are unheard of; where husband and wife remain forever united in harmony; divorce courts are unknown; and no young lady ever brought an action for breach of promise of marriage, because so shameful a breach has never occurred!"

"Terra is certainly beautiful," replied



the swain. "As you say, she is a lovely star. Still, let us strive to be contented and happy where we are, on Mars, without too much repining at our lot. Perhaps, as far

as Terra is concerned"—he is a bit of an astronomer, and possesses a particularly good telescope—"perhaps, if truth were known, 'tis distance lends enchantment to the view."



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## THE "GOLDEN ARROW."

BY MARY FRANCES WILLIAMS.

It was a little river steamer, the only one on the line which was dirty, bustling, tobacco-smoky, and uncomfortable generally. It had a little triangular cabin, where ladies stifled, and acquired ill-temperers: people were always ill-tempered on the "Golden Arrow." It had a little triangular awning above (it was a very triangular little boat), under which ladies sat, and inhaled tobacco-smoke, and looked supercilious: people almost always looked supercilious on the "Golden Arrow." It will be seen at a glance what a very disagreeable boat this was; but Alicia Clayton had a perfect passion for it. It was the scene of Alicia's romance.

People find their affinities in various odd ways. Alicia first saw hers from the upper deck of the "Golden Arrow." He was standing on the dock at Willow Landing. The boat was stopping there a wearisome length of time for freight; and Alicia, who was alone, was trying to amuse herself by watching the deck-hands rushing up and down the gangway with their rattling trucks, for her eyes ached with looking at the supercilious people under the awning. A good many of them looked at her, though; for she was one of the few who did not look supercilious, and her pretty face was pleasant and restful to the eyes.

After a while, she wearied of the deck-hands, and, looking away, suddenly encountered a pair of dark-brown eyes gazing steadily at her from under the brim of a wide "Panama." They were handsome eyes, and they were accompanied by a handsome mouth and a handsome nose; and, altogether, the Panama hat covered a very handsome head, which appertained to a medium-sized young man, in a linen coat and white trousers, with a book and pencil in his hand. Alicia sat there on the deck of the "Golden Arrow," and he stood there on the dock; and they looked each other in the face for about three minutes. And then a bell rang, and the paddle-wheels began to splash the water, and away puffed the "Golden Arrow."

Alicia watched that man until the boat

passed around the bend, and hid him from her sight; and then she sat, and looked into the water, and saw there the graceful, erect figure in the linen coat, with the brown curls blowing about in the river breeze, under the Panama hat. She wished she knew him; wondered what was his name, and where he came from; and thought what a fine, trusty face he had.

She forgot all about him, however, when she arrived at home. Her brother Tom was there, and she had quite enough to do with thinking of him; for Tom did not often come home, and he was a perfect miracle of a brother. Alicia was extravagantly proud and fond of him.

Tom was a government surveyor, and of course met with a great deal of interesting experience; and it was Alicia's delight to listen to his yarns. He had a great deal to say about a certain friend of his, who was, from his account, a marvel of all the perfections conceivable.

"So honest, so manly, so brave, and so generous," Tom said. "You ought to know him, Allie. He's just the style of fellow to take with the girls. You'd be sure to like him."

"Of course I should," said Alicia. "Why did n't you bring him home with you?"

"I tried to, but he would n't come," replied her brother, in a rather puzzled tone. "I don't know why: he would n't give any reason. Said it would n't do, or something of the sort: no idea what he meant."

Nor had Alicia.

"There's something a bit odd about Ray too," added Tom reflectively, after a little. "Generally he is the very impersonation of cheerful good humor; but now and then he has a 'blue' spell that defies all effort to dissipate. And then he hardly ever goes into society, though he is the most taking fellow I know; and he is fond of the ladies too."

"Where does he live?" asked Alicia.

"'Pon my word, I don't know," laughed Tom. "I met him out in Nevada first, and we tramped together a good while; then I came East, and left him out there, wander-

ing around; and, the next I knew, I ran against him in Broadway. He is somewhere in Maine now, I believe."

"What an odd friendship!" exclaimed Alicia. "To hear you go on about him, one would think he was your Damon; and yet you don't even know where he lives."

"He is such a good fellow, that one does n't care where he lives," said Tom.

That was only one out of a hundred such conversations. Tom talked so much of his friend, that Alicia came to think a great deal about him. She dreamed, as any romantic girl would, of some possible future time when she should meet and know this hero of her brother's praises; and she learned to play the guitar, which he had never thought of doing until Tom told her how fond Ray Liscombe was of guitar music. She had to go to the city to take lessons, which was how she came to travel so much on the "Golden Arrow" that summer.

Alicia thought no more of the young man in the Panama hat until the next time she went to the city, when they stopped at Willow Landing, and there on the dock stood the handsome stranger. As before, he looked at Alicia, and Alicia looked at him, until, with a sudden impulse, she turned to an acquaintance, who had just come on board, and inquired, —

"Who is that handsome fellow?"

"That one in the gray coat?" queried the Willow-Landing gentleman, selecting, as a matter of course, the wrong man.

"No, indeed!" said Alicia: "the one in the dark blouse."

For the stranger wore a dark blouse this time.

"Oh! that is the dock-master. I forget his name."

"The dock-master!"

Alicia turned away, disgusted. There was no possible romance about a dock-master. But, just as the boat started, she turned again to the dock, and once more looked into those frank brown eyes. A hot flush rose to her cheeks, she knew not why; and, with an impatient contraction of her brows, she turned to go on deck, — for she was standing by the gangway, — and, as she turned, she laid her hand forcibly upon the rail, which had not been properly secured, and which at her touch gave way, and she slipped and fell into the white, boiling billows which tossed in the wake of the "Golden Arrow."

There was a scream of terror from some lady on the boat, which was echoed by a shout from the dock. The next moment a man leaped into the river, and swam after Alicia. It was the handsome dock-master.

Alicia was not insensible when she was lifted from the water. She could swim a little, and she had much presence of mind; so she might have got safely to shore had there been no one to rescue her. For all that, she did not undervalue the young man's service, and thanked him most warmly and gracefully as she stood wet and dripping on the dock, waiting for the "Golden Arrow" to back up and take her on board again. He took her gratitude very modestly; rather bashfully, in fact. As he was assisting her into the boat, however, he clasped her hand more closely than was quite necessary; and in parting, to her surprise, he called her by her name, — "Miss Clayton."

Alicia was taken into the cabin, and wrapped up in unlimited shawls, and pitied and fussed over to that extent that she felt quite a heroine; but nobody could tell her the name of her preserver, which she felt she ought to know, considering that he knew hers.

Arrived at home, after explaining all about her accident, the first question she put to Tom was, —

"Tom, what is the name of the dock-master at Willow Landing?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said astonished Tom. "It used to be Tim Murphy; but I believe they have made a change lately. Why in the world do you ask such a question?"

"Oh, it was he who jumped in after me," explained Alicia; "and he is handsome as Antinous, and he called me by name."

"Did?" said Tom, not thinking of anything else to say.

"Yes; and you must go directly, and find out all about him."

"Must" meant something with Miss Alicia; so, on the next trip of the "Golden Arrow," Tom was a passenger for Willow Landing.

Alicia waited very impatiently for his return.

It was getting dark when the "Golden Arrow" arrived; and Alicia went out to wait at the gate for Tom's coming, wondering if he had found out about the dock-master.

She stood there, making a very pretty picture in her buff muslin and blue ribbons, when Tom came up the lane,—not alone. Alicia saw, with some surprise, and wondered if he had brought company from Willow Landing, as they had a number of friends there.

"Alicia," said Tom, opening the gate, and drawing in his companion, "it's Ray Liscombe."

Alicia looked bewildered.

"Your dock-master is Ray Liscombe,—my Ray," continued Tom. "Ray, this is my sister Alicia."

"Miss Clayton, allow me to hope that you experienced no ill effects from your accident yesterday," said Mr. Liscombe courteously.

Alicia bowed, and gave him her hand, saying something polite, without much idea of what it was.

She followed her brother and his companion into the house, in a very puzzled frame of mind; but Tom, when they were seated in the parlor, proceeded to explain that Ray's mother lived in Willow Landing, but Ray himself had not lived anywhere in particular since his boyhood days had ended, but had spent his life in gratifying his taste for roaming. He had now grown tired of knocking about the world. Tom supposed, and had come home to settle down.

All of which Tom detailed for Alicia's benefit, while Mr. Liscombe sat quietly listening.

"I was so glad to find him," concluded Tom, "and had so much trouble getting him to come home with me, that I have n't thought to ask him how in the world he came to be a dock-master. How is it, Ray?"

"It is very simple," smiled Ray. "I was in New York on rather unpleasant business that time when we last met. It was nothing less than the loss of my very moderate fortune which called me to the East. My agent failed, and I had not even enough left to live on until I could get suitable employment; so I took the first thing which offered, and that was the situation of dock-master. I flatter myself that I have filled it quite creditably."

"You would fill anything creditably, my boy," was Tom's laughing but earnest comment.

Ray went back to Willow Landing next morning. Alicia noticed that he made no

answer to Tom's cordial charge to come again, often; and, when she repeated the invitation, he only bowed, and said politely, —

"Thank you."

She felt sure that he would not come.

And he did not come. Tom met him often, Alicia but seldom; but he came no more to see them.

After a while, Alicia missed him from the dock at Willow Landing when she went to the city on the "Golden Arrow." She questioned Tom, and was informed that Ray had gone to New York, where he had found a situation in a bank. He told her, also, that Ray's mother had lately died.

Tom corresponded regularly with his friend, and saw him whenever he went to New York.

One day he came home with a very grave face, and went into Alicia's little sitting-room.

"Allie," said he, "I've heard something about Ray Liscombe."

Alicia turned white.

"No harm?" she cried. "O Tom! it is n't any harm?"

Tom told her in a very few words. It was not much; but it explained the hint of mystery and reserve about Ray. He was not a legitimate son: his dead mother had never been a wife. Ray had always deeply felt the taint upon his birth, though he had never named the subject.

Alicia was relieved, on hearing this. She had feared worse, though she could not tell what.

"Is that all?" she asked.

"That is all," said Tom. "I should n't have told you, but—I thought you liked him, Allie, and, if you do, you ought to know."

"I do like him," said Alicia gravely; "and this does not make any difference, Tom, for he is not to blame for it, you know."

"No," said Tom simply.

And then he went and wrote to Ray, inviting him to come and spend Christmas with them.

"You must come," Tom wrote. "We will not accept any excuse. Alicia says so too."

A few days later, he received Ray's answer. He carried it to his sister; and Alicia read it and cried over it, and then smiled and read it again.

Ray wrote that he could not come, because he felt that it was more than he could bear to be with Alicia when he could not offer her his love; for he loved her passionately, but he would never offer her a tarnished name.

Tom wrote a very short reply.

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“Got your letter, old boy. Showed it to Allie. She says you must come at Christmas; and—I don’t know exactly how to get at it—the fact is, she commissions me to offer you her heart and hand, since you

won’t offer yours. She loves you, Ray; and so do I, God bless you! I won’t have any other brother. Now come. Tom.”

Ray came.

Some months later, Tom overheard the following scrap of conversation:—

Ray *Liscombe loquitur* :—

“Where shall we go for our wedding tour, Alicia?”

Alicia *loquitur* :—

“Ray, dear, it shall be only a trip on the ‘Golden Arrow.’ ”

## THE HEIR OF MILLINGFORD REACH.

BY AMETHYST WAYNE.

[TO BE COMPLETED IN FOUR NUMBERS.]

### CHAPTER I.

"This completes your survey of South Hams, and now I think you have explored pretty thoroughly the garden of Devon," said my kind friend and host, Squire Ned, of Dingley Moor, shaking out the reins and chirruping to the noble pair of grays, who responded cheerfully to the suggestion, and, stretching forth their slender limbs, and arching their graceful necks, whirled away with the light vehicle over the smooth highway at a steady speed, which might well have excited the envy of every admirer of equine prowess who met us on the road.

"You have given me a treat which I shall never forget, my dear Squire Ned. It would be impossible to enjoy this rural tour so much in any other way. An ordinary traveller might go away dissatisfied, but you have given me an opportunity to look into the very heart of the beautiful country. My visit to Devon will always be a bright oasis in my very commonplace life."

My words were from the very depths of a grateful heart. Squire Dingley had thoroughly won my esteem and respect the first time I saw him, which was in a dusty London office. I had come from America to introduce, for certain parties there, a new and valuable improvement in machinery, and Squire Dingley accidentally entered the office of the firm, who were to take out the British patent for my employers. It came around naturally that the conversation, after exhausting the merits of the machinery, turned upon my own affairs, and I mentioned that when my business engagement was over I meant to make a leisurely visit to the county of Devon, where my parents were both born. No sooner had I made known this intention than Squire Ned seized me by the hand, and shook me in no lackadaisical manner.

"That's right, lad! That's a sensible move. You come straight out to Dingley Moor, and I'll show off old Devon to you.

I live in the South Hams district myself. I know every rood of ground in the shire, and it will be a real pleasure to go about with you."

Of course I was only too thankful to accept such opportune services, and accordingly when the affairs of Hatch, Brown & Co. were all safely disposed of, I found myself, one fine afternoon, leaving the steam carriage at Plymouth, and rumbling along in a stagecoach, on my way out to the estate of Edward Dingley, Esq., who I found was well known by all classes in that part of the country.

A hearty welcome awaited me. Not alone from "Squire Ned" (as I found was his familiar address in the neighborhood), but from his good-natured, easy wife, and his two rosy, rollicking daughters. I was in truth made completely at home, with that frank, matter-of-course manner, which awakens as much astonishment as gratitude from all American guests, in the inimitably hospitable home of your true British gentleman. We had spent a good month riding around the country. I had taken close survey of Dartmoor, with its purple wastes of meagre pasturage, its far stretching morass, and broken, rocky height. I had passed through the more favored region, where the fat, bright-red kine wandered mid fields waving like the sea with billowy fragrance. I had admired the cool, sweet dairies, with their wealth of golden butter and creamy cheese. I had passed from farmhouse to manor, from cottage to palace, from village to city, along winding river, and beside gem-like lakes, and now we were returning to Dingley Moor, well satisfied, though slightly fatigued with our long journeying.

The noble horses dashed on gayly, as if aware that their heads were turned again toward the generously filled stables of Dingley Moor, and for a little while we fell into silence. But presently my companion checked the grays into a sober walk, and then extending his hand toward a gray mass

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of turreted roof, rising out of a broad sweep of evergreen trees, just across a sunny emerald meadow, through which shone the bright line of light marking a brooklet passage, he said in an eager, interested voice,

"Do you see yonder roof, Romaine? I can tell you a romantic story about that old place. I'll drive round to give you a good view. There is not a finer estate, out of the peerage, in all England, and yet there it is, idle, shut up, useless. It's a confounded shame."

He drove me through a narrow lane which led from the highway into a rear avenue, and we soon were sweeping around the fine old mansion, which wore a melancholy, deserted air, with its closed shutters, its barred doors and silent walks. The grounds around were magnificent, and the massive old house, and its numberless attachments of conservatory, pinery and stable, showed on what a grand scale the establishment had been kept up.

Squire Ned brought the horses to a full pause, and leaned forward, eying the great house with a melancholy gaze.

"How glad and merry the old place has been before now! It cuts to my heart to see it in its gloomy estate. Well, well. Do you know, Romaine, I am just coming to the explanation of my earnest desire to get you out here? I had a motive, though maybe you never mistrusted it."

I stared at him in amazement. He laughed in his mellow, cheery tones, shaking off the momentary melancholy, and went on archly,

"Do you know, youngster, your face won upon me the very moment I set my eyes upon it? It is not the ugliest phiz I have seen; yet it was not the comeliness which attracted me; but that frank, bright look, which shows the ready wit as well as the honesty and trustfulness. I said at once, 'Here's the fellow for our work;' and when I learned that you were an American, I was all the better pleased. Yankee ingenuity and perseverance are famous, even across the Atlantic. The fact is, Romaine, your play day is out, and now I'm going to set you to work."

I think my face betrayed my astonishment, so that there was no need of speech. At all events, I was dumb, waiting for further enlightenment.

"You've told me your story so frankly, I have no scruples in saying that. It will be

worth your while to take up with my offer. If you are successful, it will bring you in a very cosy payment. If you fail, all your expenses will be paid, and a reasonable allowance made for the expenditure of your time. I see you are amazed, so I'll hurry at once into the details of the story, which, as you may surmise, is connected with this deserted place before you. The man whose death has barred up the doors and closed the shutters of this once famously hospitable house was named Ralph Millingford. He was an old man, with hair bleached to silver snow, when they put him into his coffin and bore him out to that little dell yonder, beyond the stone gateway—you can just see the shaft of the great monument between the boughs. But of all the proud, stiff-necked mortals, he was the worst I ever knew. And yet I had a warm attachment for the man. He was a bosom friend of my father's, and his son, Raymond Millingford, and I were chums at school and college, and close companions as we advanced toward manhood. Raymond was the only child, and he was a fine fellow, somewhat impulsive and headstrong when once excited, but with a heart true as steel, and tender as a woman's. I cannot explain satisfactorily to myself, much less to you, how it came about, but while in London, Raymond fell into bad ways. I have taken pains to ascertain that he was under the influence of a man—wily and fascinating enough for Lucifer himself—who purposely sought to work his ruin. Well, he succeeded in his foul design. Raymond, poor fellow! got into sad trouble, and this accursed tempter took occasion to make his disgrace public. His father had cut down his allowance, and it came out that Raymond had forged his name, and obtained an enormous sum from the banker's. The forgery I am convinced the old man would in time have forgiven; but the open disgrace—for the whole affair was blazoned forth in the papers—he would not overlook.

"I have told you of his indomitable pride. I never saw the man who was such a living incarnation of that vile sentiment. I am positive Raymond's trouble and disgrace broke his heart, but he covered his wound from sight, and masked his anguish beneath an icy calmness. He cast off his only son, forbade his name to be mentioned at Millingford Reach, quietly ignored his very existence, and went sternly and drearily on

his chosen path. There was a niece of his wife's who lived with him, a sweet, innocent creature, who was very fond of Raymond. He drove her off one day for venturing to break his rule, and endeavoring to soften his resentment against his son. And after that he was quite alone except for the servants, and the guests which were still ceremoniously invited to great, solemn dinner parties. So he lived, and here, six months back, he died. The very day before his death he sent for me and two of the family lawyers, and left in our hands the extremely difficult and solemn trust of executing his will.

"After the lapse of twenty-five years, circumstances had come to his knowledge which proved that his unhappy son had been the victim alike of his father's relentless cruelty and his treacherous companion's plot. The forgery had been committed, not by Raymond, but by the villain who had thrown upon his head all the odium of the guilty deed.

"The anguish of that dying old man was a woful sight to witness, but his pride was still the supreme sentiment. He laid out the programme for our movements with wonderful clearness and precision, considering his weak state, and carefully guarded every loophole through which further notoriety could cast shame upon his proud old name.

"The immense property is left, first to Raymond Millingford, if that unfortunate gentleman is still alive, but with his last breath the poor old father declared his conviction that his son would be the first to greet him in the other world. In case of Raymond's death, to his direct heirs. Failing any such claims, we are to hunt up the heirs of his niece, who was turned away from his house for her earnest intercession in Raymond's behalf, and of whom he had lost all trace. Her name was Ada Dorne, but in all probability she married, for she was a pretty, lovable creature. Now you understand something of our task. It were a comparatively easy matter to find out these people, whether they be living or dead, if we could only scatter advertisements broadcast over the country and across the ocean. But this we are expressly forbidden to do. The whole thing is to be managed privately, so that there shall be no revival of the previous scandal, the old wretched, melancholy story. Perhaps, too, Mr. Mill-

ingford dreaded to have the public attention drawn to his own pitiless, inexorable policy. But it makes our part of the business a very difficult one; far more perplexing and hopeless than we had any idea of at the outset, for to find either of the parties seems beyond our power."

"What becomes of the property if you are unsuccessful? Was there no provision made for such a contingency?" asked I, deeply interested in his communication.

"He took care for that. His cool consideration for all possible emergencies was something quite wonderful. It will be given, the bulk of it, to a distant relation of his, a John Jourdain. And there again you come to another point in the case. It is this fellow, this John Jourdain, with whom you are to deal. My colleague and I have each become convinced that he knows something about these heirs, on one side or the other, and is hiding it from us. He is a wily, treacherous man, and we need to move cautiously. That is why we select a stranger to watch the gentleman's movements. I was going to give you my idea of his character; but, on second thought, I forbear. You shall form your own judgment. But by all means begin your investigations with him, for there is no question, in my mind, but he has obtained the clew for which we have so vainly searched."

"There can be no harm in watching him a little, even if your suspicions are groundless. Let me see him occasionally for a couple of weeks, and I'll venture to promise you my verdict," returned I, thoughtfully.

"I'll manage all that for you," replied Squire Ned, giving me a vigorous punch in the side; "and I'm sure you'll ferret out the ruth. I knew you were the very man for us the moment I put my eyes upon you. *Something in your face seemed to appeal to my confidence and friendship.* You'll try it, then?"

"Certainly," answered I, promptly, "and had I suspected your object, I would not have allowed you to waste all this time in pleasuring."

"Oh, I didn't mean you should be cheated out of your tour through Devon. I'm sorry you failed to find traces of your parents and relations. I'll ask old Hewins, who has been parish clerk for years, if he ever heard the name."

"Thank you. But it is hardly worth extra trouble; I suppose they came from



very humble life, though I don't see as that circumstance need to have obliterated all remembrance of them in their old home. I knew they were very poor always in America, but I had a singular conviction that I should find them well-connected here. But to return to business and the affairs of this fine old estate, which lies begging for an owner. How shall I get into the society of this John Jourdain? Where shall I find him?"

"I'll manage all that. You shall have an introduction to my friend Cathcart. He's quite insane in his admiration for America, and he'll insist upon your paying him a visit. John Jourdain has become a constant visitor there; whether the attraction is one of the colonel's pretty daughters, or the agreeable society he manages to gather together under his hospitable roof, I cannot say. Maybe you'll be able to tell me. By the way, keep your own heart well steeled; little Madge has the brightest eyes in the shire, and her sister is a noted belle."

I smiled rather sadly as I replied,

"I have good cause to wear armor, my dear sir. What chance do you think I have for success, whose whole fortune lies, as I have told you, in my own wits, whose very ancestry are so obscure and humble that I have found it impossible to hunt up a single relative in the shire where my parents were born not more than fifty years ago? And I may well be wise enough to shun the moth's folly, and not rashly dash myself against a light which will only smudge and burn. I think I am safe as far as the young ladies are concerned, sir."

"You are a frank, manly sort of fellow, and I wouldn't be afraid to trust a girl of mine to you, fortune or no fortune," replied the kind-hearted squire. "Hollo! as I live there's Ross Cathcart coming this way. See what a rider he is, even at his age. That comes of keeping clear of all this load of flesh, which makes me look like a meal-bag if I get into the saddle."

He touched the whip lightly to the horses, and dashed forward into the highway again, drawing up across the road, and barring the way for the tall, erect horseman who was steadily cantering along in the shade of the great oak-tree.

The rider lifted his head with a haughty stare, which changed quickly to a broad, genial laugh as he exclaimed,

"Why, Squire Ned, who'd have thought

of seeing you in these parts! How do you find yourself, now-a-days?"

"Tolerable, tolerable, but not able to ride a hunter in the old style, colonel. You rascal! do you mean to shirk always? Who'd think you was of my age, up to a day? Where's your wrinkles, and your gray hairs, and your stooping shoulders? I do believe you made a compact with the nameless gentleman in hoofs, and got hold of the elixir of perpetual youth. Look out for him, Romaine. Ah! excuse me, you've had no introduction. Colonel Cathcart, allow me the honor of making known to you Mr. Raymond Romaine, a talented young gentleman from America, who has distinguished Dingley Moor by a short but pleasant visit."

I could only bow and smile, hiding my amusement and annoyance at this flourishing description, since I suspected my friend had a motive for making due impression upon Colonel Cathcart.

The latter was a courtly, polished gentleman, and after a brief conversation I was warmly urged to visit him as soon as I left Dingley Moor. I saw that the invitation came from a really earnest desire to learn more of my country, and I accepted the honor as given rather to America than to myself, and promised to appear at Eglantine Terrace that very week.

Accordingly, one cool, pleasant afternoon, I found myself walking the short distance between the station where the steam-carriage had left me, and the fine estate of Colonel Cathcart. I soon perceived the origin of its name. The pretty, graceful mansion was built upon a broad terrace of the most vivid emerald hue, smooth and glossy as velvet, edged with the darker green of a carefully tended hedge of eglantine. I did not need to give any summons at the door, for a servant, perceiving my approach, met me on the steps.

"Was I the American gentleman from Dingley Moor? Colonel Cathcart had left orders for sending to the station when the next train came in, and had been down once on the arrival of the early morning train. He had gone down to the park, and the ladies were out driving. Would I please to enter the house, or walk down the avenue toward the park? I should be sure to find the colonel there."

This kindly interest and preparation for my coming set me at ease directly, and re-

moved the faint feeling of intrusion which had crept upon me.

I said at once that I would walk down to the park, that I should enjoy it exceedingly, and receiving the necessary directions, I set forth, declining an attendant.

## CHAPTER II.

The narrow but carefully tended pathway led from out the odorous gardens, behind the conservatories, into a smoothly turfed field, and thence across a meadow, and a little rustic bridge spanning a noisy brooklet, into a charming grove of chestnut and beech. I paused to enjoy that delicious aroma which only comes from the woods, and leaning lightly against a tree, listened in eager delight to the mingling voices of the feathered songsters. I had retreated somewhat from the path and thrown myself on the mossy ground, to listen to a note entirely new to me, which I found afterward was that of the hermit thrush. While I was still entranced with the wondrous sweetness of the melody from the distant tree-top, I heard the crisp crackling of the underbrush, and a quick, light step coming toward me. I half rose to my feet, expecting to see the colonel's straight, tall figure; instead, however, there glided out from the drooping boughs a graceful girl in a white cambric dress, with a straw hat setting jauntily upon a coil of glossy brown tresses.

My involuntary movement had drawn her attention; a pair of soft brown eyes glanced questioningly into my face, but were instantly withdrawn, and she hastened on and disappeared behind the trees.

"One of the young ladies, I suppose," soliloquized I; "the colonel is probably close at hand. I will wait until he comes."

Even as the thought was passing through my mind, other steps were crunching through the bushes, and a gentleman came hurrying along, as if in pursuit of the girl. He paused abruptly, looking eagerly in the direction in which she had vanished, and then a black tempest of rage broke over his face.

I watched him in utter astonishment. He was young and remarkably handsome, dressed too with the utmost care and elegance. But his behaviour was utterly absurd, and, despite his evident earnestness, amused me as much as the wayward mood of a spoiled child.

He stood still a moment, glowering at the bend of the trees which concealed the young lady's further progress from his view. Then suddenly he dashed his hands together with the fierceness of a maniac, and stamped into the ground until his heel had burrowed out a yawning gap in the rich black mould. A delicate cambric handkerchief had been hanging carelessly from his right hand. He beat it against the tree-trunk near him as though it were the animate object of his wrath, *shrieking, rather than muttering*, —

"Curses upon her obstinacy! How dare she resist my will? She shall learn yet that my wishes must be obeyed, my plans accomplished. Refused—rejected—cast aside! Perdition! She shall rue this day. I will compel her to sue humbly for the favor she spurns now. There are more ways than one to the end, and marry me she shall."

As he said this he gave a furious twist to the handkerchief, seized it with both hands, tore it in halves, and flung the two fragments one on either side of him, and strode on. But not quite out of my vision, for suddenly I saw him pause, stagger against a tree, and somehow it seemed to me that his whole figure grew rigid and stiff as that of an iron statue. I watched him in mingled alarm and astonishment, but there he stood bold upright, without so much as a finger's movement, for half an hour.

I was just thinking of going forth from my retreat, and passing by him to ascertain if he had really been petrified by some mysterious spell, when he started forward with a jerk, a rapid bound, and looked all around him with a singular glance, which I could not satisfactorily analyze, for rage, loathing, alarm, and horror were all blended in it. He seemed relieved to find himself, as he evidently believed, free from observation, and walked rapidly out of sight.

I drew a long breath of relief, and came out from my leafy screen. Idle curiosity prompted me to secure the pieces of handkerchief, but it was changed to a deeper feeling when I read the name daintily embroidered on one corner. The idea had not entered my mind before, but the name was *John Jourdain*.

"Well," muttered I, "I am learning a peculiar trait of the gentleman's character, and a very delicate bit of news is at my mercy in the very outset. So the young gentleman is a rejected lover! Humph! I am utterly disappointed in his appearance."

I was prepared for a strong, powerful, wild nature. The fellow seems as wayward and uncontrolled as a child. I fancy it will not be difficult to find out all the silly fellow's secrets."

So I reasoned, counting my task a very light one. It was not my last mistake concerning John Jourdain. I put the torn kerchief in my pocket, and went on toward the park. I began quite to despair of finding the colonel at all, when he made his appearance, accompanied by one of the keepers. I received a warm welcome, with profuse apologies for his absence, and we strolled slowly back to the house, chatting socially.

"You will find but few guests with us just now," observed the colonel, as we emerged into the avenue, and caught a glimpse of a pretty group on one of the verandas, the flutter of light dresses and gay ribbons giving gay effect to the rich green of the turf and shrubbery.

"We are not always left in such peaceable possession of the place. But we shall be all the better able to devote ourselves to your entertainment. There is only one gentleman here today, — Mr. Jourdain. Perhaps you have heard of him. He is something of a lion in these parts on account of his exclusiveness and his fastidious tastes. A handsome fellow, and wonderfully fascinating in his manners when he chooses, and a bit of a dandy, but with a remarkable gift for keeping his business to himself. No one ever knows anything about him that he does not choose to tell, and it is quite a mystery how he manages to live so luxuriously without an ostensible income. He is as enervated as an Eastern satrap, and never stirs, either riding, visiting, or pleasuring, without a man-servant at his heels. That is John Jourdain. My girls declare half the fascination he exerts in society is owing to the singular circumstances which surround him, and the mysterious ways of his man Antoine, who is quite a libel on his nationality, he is so grave and staid and formal, but who comes forward at the most unlikely moments and drags away his master in answer to some unknown summons, in utter defiance of etiquette or politeness. But if I do not mind he will hear me, and I confess I should wilt down at once beneath one of his searching glances. Come this way, if you please."

In another moment I stood in the midst of the group, and had received my introduction to the whole party. Mrs. Cathart was a pleasant, matronly woman, who made me quite as much at ease as her husband had done. The young ladies were gracious, but I could see watched furtively for some sign of American barbarism in my manners. But the most interest I felt was in the last presentation. I bowed listlessly in response to his careless salutation, but I did not lose a single look or movement of Mr. John Jourdain's.

He was indeed a remarkably handsome man. I was more struck with that fact now than when I had seen him in the grove. The features were faultlessly symmetrical, and had a look of elaboration, as though the model had been again and again chiselled over to insure perfection. There was a Jewish cast to his face, and the large, full, velvety black eye, the glossy, jet-black mustache, and crinkling raven hair, produced a singularly impressive effect in contrast to a complexion unusually clear, and pale to waxiness. His form set off the handsome face, being straight, willowy, and slender. I have seen many a delicately reared lady with a hand less soft and white and supple than that on which shone the massive ring, with two diamond J.'s in a black enamel ground. He evidently affected languor, for his movements were slow, while inimitably graceful; and his words were almost drawled, but, spoken by those bright, scarlet lips, with the lustrous eyes bent upon you, it was almost as impossible to heed the defect as for the fascinated bird to note the serpent's fang while held by its basilisk spell.

I was glad to see that he considered me as a person of no consequence, quite out of the pale of his civilization, for it allowed me to watch him as closely as I pleased. I was astonished to find there was so much dignity and self-possession about the man, after the childish behaviour I had witnessed in the grove. His language was choice, his remarks sparkling with wit, or earnest with grave intelligence. Instinctively I found myself ashamed of the erroneous opinion I had so hastily formed, and courageously acknowledging that I had found a "foeman worthy of my steel."

He talked chiefly to the ladies, now and then turning to the colonel for corroboration of some assertion; and what puzzled me was the easy, familiar manner with

which both listened to him. The brief glimpse I had caught of the lady in the grove, in the single instant when her face was turned toward me, did not warrant me in deciding which of the two it could have been, except for the eyes. And those of Miss Catharine Cathart were of deep blue, while her hair was, in my opinion, more golden, and her figure too tall and stately to have belonged to the young lady who had rejected this fascinating hero, and made him so utterly forget the nonchalance which seemed now a part of his very nature. But the other sister, although she came nearer to my ideas, was so perfectly at ease, so merry and gay, I could not believe it possible she could have passed through so unpleasant a scene and show no sign of it. My perplexity in this matter was relieved when we entered the house. In a flower-wreathed, crystal recess, opening from the drawing-room, sat a third young lady, with a fairy child of six or seven at her knee examining a book of prints. Colonel Cathart led me thither at once.

"My darling, come here," said he. And the wee maiden flew into his arms at once. "This is our pet, our blossom, our baby, Mr. Romaine. And this is Miss Eveline Eaton. Now you are acquainted with all the family."

I just touched the tips of my fingers to the extended hand of the calm, grave girl, as I caught a glimpse once more of those sweetly serene brown eyes which had looked upon me in the grove.

"So this is the young lady whom John Jourdain declares shall marry him, despite her first refusal. She will be worth my study," said I, mentally, and took my seat there in the fairy retreat, with little May on my knee. The young ladies had drawn John Jourdain to the centre-table, on which lay a pile of fresh, uncut monthlies, just from the London publishers. He gave them gallant attention, and was apparently entirely unconscious of our quiet group in the conservatory window; at least I should have said so, but that once, while the gay Madge was laughing over a ludicrous fashion-plate, I caught a single glance swept from under those long black eyelashes like the flash of a naked sword-blade.

Miss Eaton saw it too, for a flush shone a moment on her clear cheek, and a troubled glimmer broke up the serenity of her eye. I had no longer any doubt. It was

she who had refused him. I wondered what relation she bore to the family, and ventured to interrogate.

"This is a very lonely place, as charming as its address. I was bewitched with its name before I saw Eglantine Terrace. It is your home, I suppose, Miss Eaton?"

"Only for the present," replied the low, calm voice. "I am simply May's governess."

"Ah!" exclaimed I, involuntarily, "I am so glad of that."

The white, drooping eyelids were raised; the brown eyes smiled an interrogation. I laughed gayly, astonished to find how completely that little explanation had put me at ease.

"Because I am without pretensions myself. I make my own fortune and position, you know. I am an American, and at best one feels a little awkward amidst the formal aristocracies of the old world."

She understood me perfectly. I knew it by the frank, friendly smile.

"You will find this family all that true nobility should be, — unaffected, genial, and generous. It was like a new atmosphere, a haven of rest, to me when I came here. I have been very happy at Eglantine Terrace."

A little fluttering sigh saddened the last words.

"You have been? I trust there has come no change," said I, quickly, quite unconscious of the impertinence of the remark.

Again the soft brown eyes went over my face. I was stroking May's golden curls, and tried to seem unconscious of it.

"I hope none will come," said she, in a low voice, letting her eye rove for just one second back to the centre-table. "Threats are not always fulfilled."

"Has he dared to threaten you? Shame upon him for an unmanly poltroon!" said I, indignantly, looking likewise toward the elegant figure lounging between the fair daughters of the house.

"It was you then out in the grove? You saw — you heard, perhaps" — began she, in a low, agitated voice.

"Nay," returned I, hastily, anxious to spare her delicacy; "the first sound of your voice came to me when you responded to Colonel Cathart's introduction. I saw Mr. Jourdain after you had passed on. Perhaps I am quick at drawing inferences; that is all. Do not fear any harm from me."

She looked relieved, and answered, with that winning simplicity which afterward I perceived to be one of her most engaging traits, —

"No, I should never fear you, sir. Something assures me of your sincerity, your friendliness, just as indubitably as some other emotion makes me shrink away in loathing from one who proffers all possible kindness and attention. I can give you no explanation for these mysterious impressions: I never could understand them, and yet I have never found them at fault."

"They are perhaps the magnetic thrills only recognizable by finely strung and thoroughly pure spirits," answered I. "And, though perhaps it is hardly proper at this early stage of acquaintance for me to say it, I am impelled to acknowledge that I am greatly relieved to know you do not respond to the professed devotion of the man yonder."

Did he hear me? We both started guiltily, for at that moment John Jourdain rose from his seat and walked toward us. More than ever was I impressed with the richness of the dowry which Nature had bestowed when he was given to life, as the elegant form came lightly and gracefully across the room, the warm sunlight from our crystal retreat flooding its glory over him, lighting up the brilliant face, and dancing gayly across the diamonds in his breastpin, and writing his initials in a rainbow of fire on the black shield of the signet ring.

I turned almost reverentially to glance at the slender, quiet girl at my side. What had she found within her innocent heart to enable her to withstand such a temptation? She, a poor, humble governess, to refuse so peremptorily the honorable offer of this favorite of fortune — this idol of fashion! The lips were compressed just a little, the cheeks faintly flushed, but the brown eyes were calm, courageous, resolute, as Eveline Eaton looked up into John Jourdain's handsome face. He bowed with courteous grace.

"You make a charming picture here — you three, in a frame-work of flowers. Pet May, how have you passed the day? Mr. — I beg your pardon, sir, I have lost the name. Miss Madge is wondering if you would not like to see the latest London fashions, daintily got up in friend White's inimitable style."

"My name is Romaine, sir," replied I,

coldly. "Miss Eaton, will you come and help me criticise these same mystical canons from the autocrat of fashion?"

She gave me a grateful glance, and rose at once. As we crossed the drawing-room together, I could not forbear sending back a triumphant look to the recess where John Jourdain still remained. There was no visible sign of the chagrin which must have filled his heart, for it was quite evident the fashion-books were merely a bait to entice me away, and leave him opportunity to speak alone with Miss Eaton. He stood toying with May's curls, and telling a fairy story with the most eager vivacity, and with such spirited, comical gestures that presently he had the whole family around him, listening as admiringly as the delighted child. Miss Eaton looked from the absorbed group back to the print she held, and said to me, in a low voice, —

"It is very strange that no one else sees beneath the comely mask. Or perhaps it is more singular that you should share my antipathy, for I am certain that you do distrust and dread him just as much as I. All others praise and admire. You are the first I have seen who did not yield to the spell."

"Perhaps because he has deemed me too insignificant to waste his arts upon. Yet I hope you will believe that it proves me a friend of yours and a kindred spirit. Trust me, if there is any way that I can assist you while I am here, either in avoiding his attentions or foiling his manœuvres, I am entirely and heartily at your service."

"You have shown yourself apt and willing already," answered she. "I owe you my hearty thanks."

Here Colonel Cathart called me to see an Indian curiosity, and after that dinner was announced. We did not linger at the table after the ladies retired. Mr. Jourdain was the first to push away his plate of walnuts and set the wine-glass aside.

Colonel Cathart invited me out on the veranda to try a choice cigar. I longed to decline when I saw that Mr. Jourdain was not to accompany us, for I feared he would find an opportunity to annoy Miss Eaton by some adroit manœuvre, which I suspected to be peculiar to himself. But it seemed extremely rude on my part, since I had admitted my habit of smoking, and I followed him with the best grace I could. I was relieved by the appearance of Mr. Jourdain's handsome face, thrust through the jas-

mine sprays of a trellised window beyond us, a short time after we had left the dining-room. I guessed that Miss Eaton had wisely escaped to her private room, and enjoyed the idea of discomfiture, although there was no sign of it in his indolently dreamy face.

"What! lingering over those odious cigars all this while, colonel? You are regular Turks."

"You meant odorous, Jourdain. It is a mystery even now to me how a fellow of your luxurious tastes eschews the fragrant weed," said the colonel, good-humoredly.

"Oh, I leave Antoine and the chimney to do my smoking," answered he, glancing carelessly to the group of fir-trees near by, where leaned a straight, stalwart figure, clad in a very plain but tasteful livery.

"So that is the ubiquitous servant," soliloquized I. "I must scrape acquaintance with the fellow presently."

"Where are the ladies? Have they all deserted you?" asked the colonel.

"I had generosity enough to relieve them. They have gone to attend to the evening toilet. Miss Madge tells me the Armadales and Claytons are coming over for the evening, and that we are to dance presently. I am going to gather up my resources for the occasion."

And, lightly laughing, he stretched his graceful figure on the smooth greensward at our feet.

"Puff away, gentlemen; you won't disturb me in the least. I'll take your smoke as a soporific, and try a nap."

He shook out his luxuriant, wavy black hair to shade his eyes, closed the white pearly lids so closely that the heavy black lashes laid against the transparent cheek, and seemed fast asleep in less than five minutes.

Colonel Cathart eagerly led the conversation to American themes, and I, unconsciously warming with patriotic fervor, conversed earnestly, and now and then found myself in the midst of quite an enthusiastic dissertation. Presently a servant came out to the master of the house. The gamekeeper wanted some directions concerning the poaching-trap. Colonel Cathart, excusing himself, went away to see the man. He had scarcely vanished from sight when John Jourdain's melodious voice startled me into dropping what was left of my cigar.

"Sir American, your patriotism is quite

commendable. There are very many admirable characteristics in the race, with one obnoxious feature. Yankee meddlesomeness, to Englishmen, for instance, is intolerable and unpardonable. I recommend you to refrain from exhibiting such a trait during your stay in Great Britain."

The angry blood rushed hot and seething from my heart, tingling in every vein, but I forced myself to speak in a calm voice, as I replied, —

"I take your advice, Mr. John Jourdain, for what it is worth. Meddlesome or otherwise, John Bull has never gained anything in seeking to intimidate or suppress Brother Jonathan."

Saying which, I turned on my heel and walked away.

Later in the evening, when I met Mr. Jourdain again in the midst of the gay circle of the drawing-room, he paused from a brilliant sally of wit to flash upon me a glance of angry defiance, and I knew that it was a gauge flung down at my feet; and I knew also that he was as conscious as I of the instinctive antagonism between us. Somehow, instead of depressing, this conviction animated and exhilarated me. I rallied all my forces, and entered the field boldly. I talked fearlessly and gayly. Once or twice I know I half paused in astonishment at my own extravagant gayety. I perceived that I was making a favorable impression, not alone upon the host, but that the young ladies, who had looked carelessly upon me as a dull fellow their father had picked up for curiosity's sake, began to give more respectful attention in my direction. A party of friends had arrived from a neighboring estate, — two gentlemen and several ladies, — and presently Miss Eaton was called to the piano. I was listening politely to the gay chattering of Madge Cathart and her friend, Rose Clayton, a brilliant, showy girl, who had evidently fastened upon me as susceptible and promising prey; and John Jourdain was toying with the bouquet of Catharine Clayton, and murmuring his bewildering fancies into her entranced ear, — but I am certain neither of us lost a single movement of the slender, quiet figure which glided in unobtrusively and took its station at the piano, which stood in a small recess at the end of the drawing-room, just opposite the windowed niche which was all abloom with flowers.

Eveline Eaton cast only a single glance

around the room, but her soft brown eyes met mine with a wistful, appealing look, which spoke as plainly as words. I felt an exultant gladness in this proof of her confidence, and my heart beat firmly in chivalrous response. She wished me to keep that man from annoying her. I would prove myself equal to the duty. And I was keen-eyed and alert all the evening long, although I had but a single moment's opportunity to exchange a word with her. There was a weary look on her face, and between the pauses of the music I saw that her hands dropped listlessly from the pearl keys. Once, in a cotillon, I was stationed near the piano alcove, and had an opportunity to observe her closely. I became more than ever impressed with the mysterious, subtle soul-loveliness, which made the pale, quiet face so far more nobly beautiful than the showy, brilliant countenances of the fine ladies around me. The eyelids were downcast, and I was positive I saw a tear slip through their silken fringe and splash down upon the keys. My partner had turned to her right-hand neighbor in a whispered conversation, and I glided hastily to the instrument.

"You are tired, Miss Eaton. It is a shame that you should play longer. What can I do to help you?"

She smiled gravely, while she rippled a quick measure along the keys, and answered, —

"Thank you; I appreciate your kindness. I shall do very well if he will spare me. I am nervously afraid of further speech with him."

"I will save you that, at all cost," answered I, and returned to my position in the dance.

I kept my promise a few moments after. While the ladies were resting, after the dance, Mr. Jourdain suddenly, with a carelessly muttered sentence about finding some favorite music, walked over to the piano. I seized Miss Clayton's hand and led her forward.

"Come to the piano; Mr. Jourdain is going to astonish us with his proficiency. I am confident by the look of his hand that he has wonderful genius, and can wake a magic spell along those keys."

"O Mr. Jourdain! you will play for us yourself?" cried Miss Clayton, eagerly, as we reached the alcove.

Mr. Jourdain bit his scarlet lip angrily,

and gave me an annihilating glance as Eveline Eaton rose, and left the stool free for him. But he sat down, and promptly spread out his slender white fingers on the keys, and filled the room with a wonderful melody, as rich and thrilling, and yet painfully wild, as might have been expected from a lost spirit exiled from paradise. Every one drew a breath of relief as the last plaintive murmur died into stillness.

"O Mr. Jourdain, what a genius you are! You had no notes either. What was that exquisite thing? I never heard it before."

"May be not," answered he. "I don't recall its name or its author."

"Probably not," said I, hastily, yielding involuntary admiration to his wonderful ability. "I suspected the gentleman could delight and astonish us. He is an *improvisatore*."

He gave me another look from those Jewish eyes, and then they fell to the keys, and were not lifted until he had finished a second piece, wilder, stranger, more stormy than the first, and quite as inexplicable probably to all but me. I instinctively drank in every thought that stormed and wailed and shrieked from the gliding pearl slipping beneath those slender finger-tips. It was a bold defiance, an angry imprecation, a passionate malediction, solely and wholly intended for me. I had scarcely breathed during the performance, and I could not suppress a shiver when it ceased, even though I met his cold, sarcastic smile. He seemed satisfied, and half rose from the seat, then sank back again.

"Miss Eaton, do you know this?"

And straightway there floated through the room a low, sweet, indescribably delicious refrain. It was Love pleading eloquently her own sweet cause. Passionate tenderness, yearning devotion, heavenly compassion, wove in their silver chimes, till the listening heart was ready to faint with surfeit of harmony. Then the tones deepened, widened, quickened; vehement supplication, earnest persuasion, passionate pleading, were all sobbing, coaxing, entreating, in the blending notes, till the ear ached in sympathy with the bursting, agonized heart, pouring out its hopes and fears. The music suddenly ceased, — died out sharply.

"Why! that is not the whole? What an abrupt close!" ejaculated Miss Clayton.

The musician gave a melancholy smile, and turned away from the instrument.

"No," said he, "that is not the whole. I have lost the conclusion, or I never knew it. Can you tell me which, Miss Eveline?"

Eveline Eaton had been standing perfectly motionless, leaning against one corner of the massive case of the piano. Her clasping hands had shaded her face from observation, but she drew them away now, and I was startled at the pallor of the cheek, the troubled, terrified look of the hitherto serene eyes. She made a great effort to speak calmly, but there was an agitated gasp in the tone.

"No, sir, I know nothing concerning that music. If you have lost the conclusion, I do not think any one else will find it."

As she said it she moved hastily to the open window on the other side, and remained there in the shade of the hanging curtains, looking forth into the night. I could not forbear following.

"Oh!" said she, in an excited voice, when she saw who it was, "I am so afraid of that man! He will keep his threat. Did not the music fascinate while it oppressed you? He told me today, again and again, that he never failed in anything he resolved upon, and that *I should be his wife yet*. I am thoroughly afraid of him. Can he find a spell powerful enough to compel me, as *the bird is drawn into the hateful jaws of the serpent?*"

She spoke in strong agitation, and I saw that her nerves had been taxed to the uttermost, so I answered, soothingly, —

"No, no. He shall not trouble you. His power is not more potent than mine. I am to remain here for some time yet. I will thwart him, — I will protect you. Spare yourself this alarm. I will manage that the company try charades now, and there shall be no further call for music. Slip away from the drawing-room, and take the rest you need so sorely."

She gave me a grateful glance, murmuring, "You are so kind! I seem to have known you always," and glided away.

I sat more than an hour at the window of the chamber allotted me that night, notwithstanding it was far into the small hours when I entered it. The events of the day had been very singular, and, as it seemed to me, extremely significant. I could not feel thoroughly satisfied that I had taken the right course to fulfill the mission intrusted to me, since, having made an enemy of him at the outset, I had lost the opportunity for intimate acquaintance, and put him on his guard against me. Yet I could not see how I could have acted differently. Finally I fell asleep puzzling over the oddness of my own sentiments. I seemed to have detested and despised John Jourdain all my life, and to have known and respected and admired Eveline Eaton for years instead of half a day.